



Journey CHURCH

UNLEASHING HOPE

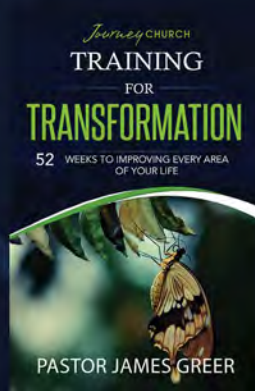
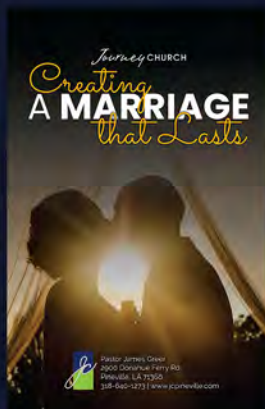
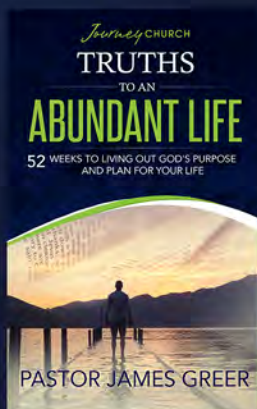
52 DEVOTIONS TO RELEASE HOPE
LIKE YOU'VE NEVER SEEN BEFORE

PASTOR JAMES GREER

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Why Unleashing Hope Devotion

THANK YOU! I want to thank Darrell & Beverly Ingram for helping edit this devotion, Joy Thornton for helping compile devotions together and Josh Poe for laying out the devotion and implementing my photography.

I'm so excited about the unleashing hope devotion!

First, I'm excited because anytime you read God's word in this format it should both encourage you and inspire you. Many of these devotions were taken from full messages I preached and then broken down into short devotions.

I understand how busy everyone is, but we need time with God and time to hear from God! This is a simple, yet powerful way to do that.

Second, I'm excited about the title Unleashing Hope because I'm going to be preaching about Unleashing Hope starting January 2022! 2020-2021 have been challenging years for everyone. I believe 2022 is going to be the year that God releases many to the things we have been hoping for.

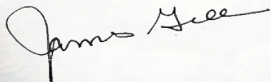
You might have been hoping for better relationships, better financial conditions, health, a child to return to the Lord, or someone who's addicted to be set free! I believe God wants to unleash His hope in your life this year like never before.

Romans 4:17-18 (NKJV)

(as it is written, "I have made you a father of many nations") in the presence of Him whom he believed--God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did; who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, "So shall your descendants be."

Talk about unleashing hope!! God told Abraham after 100 years of waiting that he is now going to have a child. If that's not a picture of hope that's released... I don't know what is!

That's what I want for you, that God would release hope in your life like you've never seen.



Pastor James Greer

Eph.3:20 Being lived out in my personal and church life!



DEVOTION 1

How to Go From Trials to Blessings

The Israelites wandered in the desert for 40 years when they could have entered the promised land in 40 days.

Deuteronomy 8:2, NKJV

"And you shall remember that the Lord your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not."

The reason you go through trials is to humble you and test you. God wants to test you to know your heart. The purpose of the test is always to teach you to trust God. When you trust God and pass the test, you get blessed.

To pass the test you're going to have to:

- Receive the Word
- Believe the Word
- Act on the Word

Joshua 1:8, NKJV

"This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success."

If you want to be SUCCESSFUL and PROSPEROUS, you must follow God's Word wherever you go in life!

Joshua 1:9, NKJV

"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

The Challenge

- Remember, in Joshua 2:3-6 and Joshua 6:15-17, God used Joshua to destroy the wall of Jericho. If God used a Priest and a prostitute, He can and will use you!



Finding Peace in the Midst of Chaos

When the chaos is going on everywhere else in the world, the most important thing for you to know is that you have a relationship with Jesus Christ.

You're not going to find peace in politics, any particular party, or the government but you will find peace in the person of Jesus Christ.

John 14:27, NKJV

"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."

Peace is a gift that only comes from Jesus Christ.

Jesus does not want your heart to be troubled about what is going on in the world. He doesn't want you to be afraid. He wants you to know this is not your home.

Peace doesn't come from the world. Peace is a by-product of trusting God's promises, purposes and plan for your life. As a result, you will receive peace from God and have peace in your life.

John 16:33, NKJV

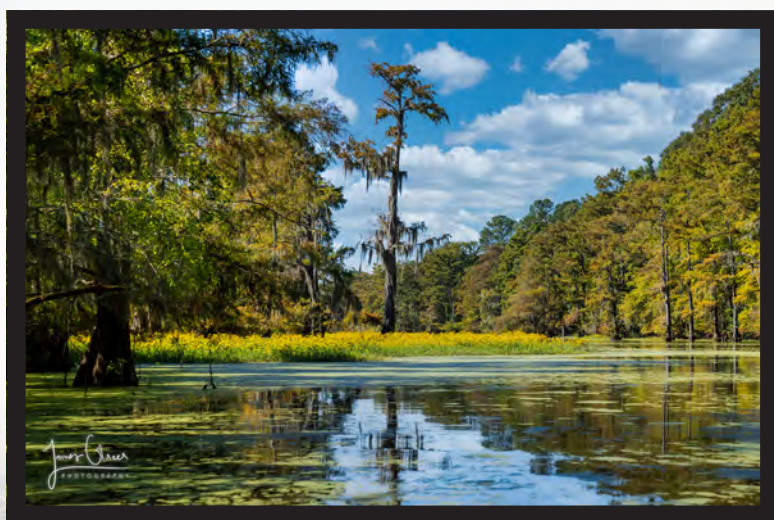
"These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world, you will have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

In a time of uncertainty, you must be dependent on Jesus.

**Saved + Dependence on Christ + Representing
Christ in the Situation = Peace in Any Case.**

The Challenge

- Define a situation in your life that you need to give to God to experience His peace.



DEVOTION 3

Great Triumph Can Only Come Out of Great Trials

6 Steps that can help you go from Tragedy to Triumph

1. Hurt and Mourn to God.
2. Question God.
3. God reveals His answer to you.
4. Agree with God.
5. Pray to God.
6. Forgive those who may have hurt you.

You can miss opportunities for blessings (or restoration) because you have overlooked the process above.

Job 42:12, NKJV

"Now the Lord blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning; for he had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, one thousand yokes of oxen, and one thousand female donkeys."

**Don't get stuck in your tragedy.
Move from your tragedy and know
there is hope at the other end...
there is triumph!**

Psalm 27:13

"I would have lost heart unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the Land of the living."

You don't have to live where you are. Life is going to get better if you wait on the Lord.

Psalm 7:33

"Wait on the Lord; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait I say on the Lord!"

The Challenge

- Practice the six steps from Tragedy to Triumph.



From Hiding to a Hero

Have you been hiding or in shame for something you've done? Jesus wants you to come out and be a hero for Christ.

When you learn to have the correct position and stand up for the right person (Jesus), He'll radically change your life.

It is not suitable for a person who is right with God to be fearful or in hiding. God didn't create you that way.

2 Chronicles 20:17

You don't need to fight this battle, but you need to position yourself. When you are in the correct position, the Lord is with you and you don't have to fear, be dismayed or discouraged!

Judges 6:1, NKJV

"Then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord. So the Lord delivered them into the hand of Midian for seven years,"

The Israelites would not admit their part of the problem and they suffered the consequences.

If you feel like God has oppressed you for a long time, own up to your part so you can move forward! You cannot blame others as a way of getting better, but you can train your way to get better.

Don't blame... don't try... TRAIN!

The Challenge

- Stop blaming others and call out to God.
- Begin your training to come out of hiding
- Be a hero for God.

Psalms 50:15, 107:19



How God Prepares You for Battle

Judges 7:1-7, NKJV

"Then Jerubbaal (that is, Gideon) and all the people who were with him rose early and encamped beside the well of Harod so that camp of the Midianites was on the north side of them by the hill of Moreh in the valley...."

Gideon led 300 men and defeated 134,000. He went through many tests, was a great leader and has some great secrets to success!

5 Things to Learn from Gideon

1. Tests teach us to trust God.
2. God calls a leader to follow.
3. God prepares the leader before He prepares the people.
4. God destroys self-confidence to build Godly influence. God wants you to go from self-reliant to God-reliant.
5. Trust God's Word over your feelings.

Gideon heard God's calling, trusted God's testing and obeyed God's command.

**The real secret to success is
trusting facts over your feelings.**

Judges 7:7, NKJV

"Then the Lord said to Gideon, 'By three hundred men who lapped I will save you, and deliver the Midianites into your hand. Let all the other people go, every man to his place.'"

The Challenge

- Is there a battle to fight that looks impossible to you that you need to trust God with?
- Do you need to allow God to take your hurt or betrayal into Godly dependence and Godly confidence?
- Is God calling you to something that you need to answer to?



DEVOTION 6

Priorities

Your priorities determine your destiny, blessings and direction. If you keep your priorities, they will bring power, privileges and pleasures. If you don't keep your priorities, they will bring punishment and persecution.

Make God your first priority.

Matthew 22:37-38, NKJV

"Jesus said to him, Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment."

Make your spouse your second priority.

Matthew 22:39, NKJV

"And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'"

When you don't keep your priorities right, you bring self-imposed jealousy, insecurity and instability into your life.

Exodus 20:4-6, NKJV

"You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God..."

The Challenge

- God makes it clear; no one is to come before Him. He is to be your Number 1. Are you placing anything before God?
- Are you placing anything before your spouse?



DEVOTION 7

How to Have Real Needs Met

Psalm 23:1, NKJV

"The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want."

The Lord has prepared the table for you. He wants to protect, provide and guide you. Everything you need is at the table. Do not get too busy to sit at the table with the Shepherd.

**Don't allow the wrong
people sit at the table with you.**

Don't walk and talk with the devil. Instead, walk and talk with the Deliverer who can meet any and every need in your life.

1 Peter 5:8, NKJV

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."

Take the table back. If you have not accepted the Father's Gift, His Son, today is the day to do it.

The Challenge:

1. Accept Jesus as your Savior.
2. Rebuke Satan in the name of Jesus.
3. Submit to God.
4. Every morning, spend time with the Father.
5. Confess your sins.



The 3 Types of Love

Proverbs 5:15-19, CEV

"You should be faithful to your wife, just as you take water from your own well. And don't be like a stream from which just any woman may take a drink. Save yourself for your wife and don't have sex with other women. Be happy with the wife you married when you were young. She is beautiful and graceful as a deer; you should be attracted to her and stay deeply in love."

To make breaking up hard, you must pursue staying in love with your spouse.

Three types of love:

1. Eros Love - an attraction love; sexually attractive and active.
2. Phileo Love - a friendship love; a companionship.
3. Agape Love - an unselfish love; a Godly love.

Many times, there's a pursuit for what is missing.

**What you don't care for,
someone or something else often will.**

It would be best if you passionately pursued your spouse now.

Romans 12:9-13, NLT

"Don't just pretend to love others. Love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other. Never be lazy, but work hard and serve the Lord enthusiastically. Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying. When God's people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality."

Three ways to pursue your mate and build friendship:

1. Show genuine affection.
2. Honor them.
3. Don't be lazy.

The Challenge:

Pursue your spouse by showing genuine affection.



Acceptable and Comparative Hatred

Luke 14:26, NKJV

"If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."

An acceptable hatred comes when you love and serve God that brings significance and satisfaction that you cannot find in any other place. Love is the opposite of hate. You cannot come to Jesus if you don't love Him more than your Father, mother, wife, children, brothers, sisters, and even your own life.

Comparative hatred is acceptable hatred. We are not to actively hate anyone.

Matthew 5:43-45, NKJV

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and the unjust."

**If you are spiritually healthy,
you don't hate people; you help people.**

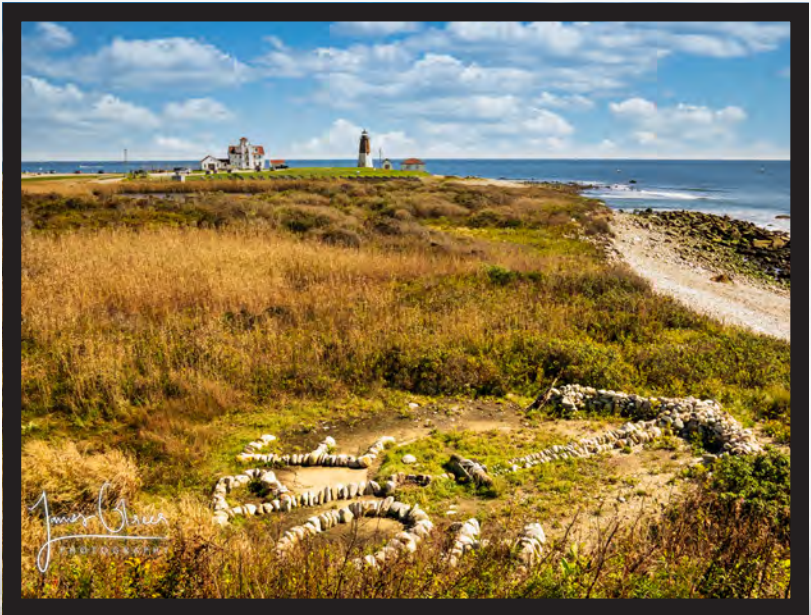
- Hurting people, hurt people.
- Insecure people need attention and reassurance.
- Healthy people want to help people.
- Insignificant people and unsatisfied people are selfish people and seldom serve others.

Galatians 5:13, NKJV

"For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another."

The Challenge:

- Pray for those who have hurt you.
- Begin proper habits.
- Commit to serving in the church.
- Commit your life to Jesus as your Savior.



Clear the Clutter

At times, life can look messy and cluttered. It can be physical or mental clutter. Remember, God is not the author of the clutter that brings confusion.

God brings peace and understanding.

1 Corinthians 14:33, NKJV

"For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints."

How do you clear the clutter in your life?

1. Understand your need for God's help.
2. Understand your need for others' help. Some clutter won't be cleared by yourself. James 5:16, NKJV
"Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much."
3. Digitally disconnect. There are many people digitally connected that have become spiritually disconnected.
4. Get the idols off the table. As a Christian, idols are anything other than Jesus to meet physical, emotional, and spiritual needs.
5. Get off the junk food. That spiritual to-go box is often wanted. Change your perception of God's Word. Quit perceiving it as something you have to read and do, but something you get to do and receive.

Matthew 4:4, NKJV

"But He answered and said, 'it is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'"

Psalm 34:8, NKJV

"Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who puts trusts in Him."

The Challenge:

- Clean everything off the table besides the Bible
- Take in and obey God's Word. This is the beginning to have a new peace that you have never had before.



How to Become a Disciple

To go to church is one thing. To **be the church** is another. You must first learn how to become a disciple.

Matthew 28:18-20, NKJV

"And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.'"

You can't make disciples until you become one!

4 Simple Steps to become a disciple:

1. Go to Church. (Hebrews 10:25, NKJV)
2. Fellowship at Church (Acts 2:41-42, NKJV)
3. Serve at Church (Luke 12:35, NIV)
4. Give to the Church (Proverbs 3:9-10, NKJV)

Proverbs 3:9-10

"Honor the Lord with your possessions, and with the first fruits of all your increase; So your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will overflow with new wine."

When you follow the 4 simple steps, you will receive joy unlike any other here on earth and in heaven!

The Challenge:

- Pray and commit to these four steps to become a disciple.



Be Planted and See the Fruit

Psalm 92:12-15, NKJV

"The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree; He shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those who are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bear fruit in old age; they shall be fresh and flourishing. To declare that the Lord is upright; He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him."

The righteous shall flourish! They will grow like a palm or cedar tree... and they will thrive.

Being self-centered is the root of almost every problem. If you want to see better fruit, you always have to change the root.

How to Be Planted

1. Have God's seed in your heart.
2. Be in the Word and under the Word.
3. Believe it's your right (as a Christian who is right with God) to flourish, thrive and prosper.
4. Be a blessing to others.
5. Stay sharp and fresh despite your age.

**Anticipation + Participation + Preparation =
Expectations Met.**

When you are planted in the house of the Lord, you will flourish!

The Challenge:

- Is there something in your life that is keeping you from being planted in the house of the Lord? Pray and ask God to reveal what it might be.



What Do You Want Your Legacy to Be?

Matthew 6:33-34, NKJV

"But seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."

**Once you know what you
want to be remembered for,
it's no longer about what you want to do.**

- Don't be remembered for your career, but your character or rewards in heaven.
- Don't be remembered for your career, but your contribution to God's Kingdom.
- Don't be remembered for your career, but choices furthering God's Kingdom.

Bring honor and glory to God in your Legacy:

1. Know God's Word to make those day-to-day choices.
2. Love and obey His Word. The more of His Word you know, the more of Him you know and love.

John 1:1, NKJV

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

God's Word Will:

- Lead to salvation. (1 Peter 1:23, NKJV)
- Guide steps. (Psalm 119:105, NKJV)
- Lift burdens. (Psalm 119:28, TLB)
- Bring Joy. (Jeremiah 15:16, NLT2)

The Challenge:

- What better choices can you make today that will make your legacy last? Would it be to go to the right places? Be with the right people? Do the right things? What do these things look like in your life?



With Jesus, it's a Win-Win

Because of what Jesus did on the cross, God's people can't lose.

Philippians 1:21, NKJV

"For me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

Life can be a win-win because it will turn out for good. God will deliver no matter what the trial.

Philippians 1:20, NKJV

"according to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death."

Not only are you assured that whatever you go through, there will be deliverance, but you can live on a day-to-day basis expecting it.

1. There will be a victory because Jesus has risen. (Matthew 28:6, NKJV)
2. Sin never had power over Jesus. (Romans 6:8-10, NIV)
3. Once you ask Jesus into your heart as Savior and Lord, your sins are forgiven once and for all.

The Challenge:

- Rest in God's presence, knowing that He has victory through His Son and that He is our deliverance.

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Find Greatness Where You Are

Learn to find your identity in Christ. Your identity cannot be found in your job, career, hobby, personality, etc. Insecurity comes from misplaced identity.

Matthew 13:16-17, NKJV

"But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it."

Learn to find your purpose in Christ. You're not a Christian because of your good works, but your purpose is good works because you're a Christian.

Ephesians 2:10, NKJV

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."

Learn how to live out your purpose.

It's one thing to know your purpose, but it's another to live it out to the glory of God.

1 Corinthians 13:1-3, NIV

"If I speak in the tongues of men and angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing."

The Challenge

- What do you think your purpose is?
- Are you living out your purpose to the glory of God?
Ask God to show you today.



Born for Greatness

Jesus says that you are born for greatness and that you will do greater things than Him.

John 14:12-14

"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will also do; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to my Father."

Here are four steps to greatness:

1. Humble yourself to God the Father and worship Him only.
2. Have the right attitude toward others.
3. Our actions of serving those who no one else will.
4. Serve God with your money.

The Challenge

- Do you have a desire to do great things for Jesus? You have to be willing to help the helpless, the lonely, and the needy.
 - Ask the Holy Spirit how you can help others so you can be part of doing extraordinary things for His glory.
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The Joy of Good Works

What can you do to enter into the joy of the Lord?

Matthew 25:21, NKJV

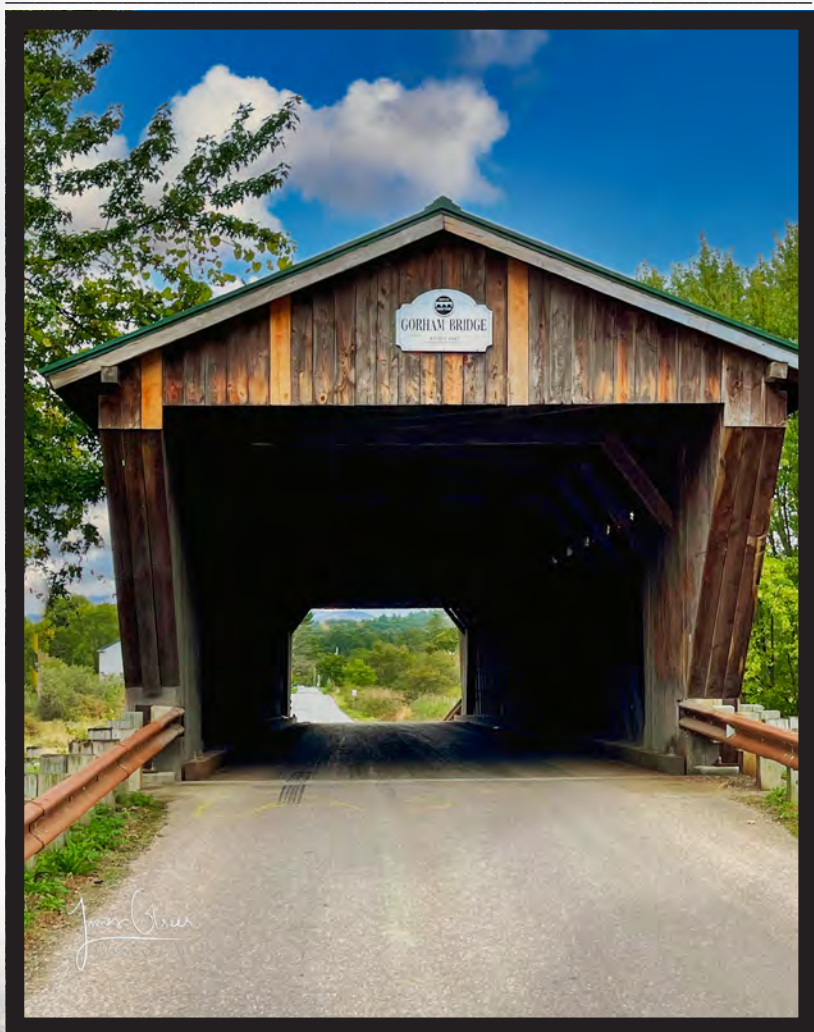
"His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of you, Lord.'"

Here are some good works that matter:

1. How you behave among the unsaved.
2. Giving money to further God's Kingdom.
3. Showing hospitality and ministering to the ministers.
4. Witnessing to the unsaved.
5. The witness of those who suffered. Those who witness while going through suffering will be rewarded here and in heaven.
6. The good works of those who finished the race.
7. Using your gifts and talents.

The Challenge:

- Be willing to commit to starting doing works that matter.
 - What good work will you start doing and when will you do it?
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What is Your Mindset?

Do you have a maintaining mindset or a multiplication mindset? You were born to be a multiplier.

Genesis 1:28, KJVAE

"And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply."

Take the example of the servants in Matthew 25:14-31

The servant who earned five more because he invested his money with the five bags had a multiplication mindset.

The servant with the two bags of silver also went to work and earned two more. He also had a multiplication mindset.

The servant with the one bag of silver dug a hole in the ground and hid the master's money. This servant had a maintaining mindset, was lazy, and was thrown into the outer darkness.

When you are faithful with what God has given you, He will multiply it and give you more.

The Challenge

- How is your mindset?
- What is God calling you to multiply?
- Would God call you lazy if He returned today?
- Would you like to change today? Do you need to ask for help?



Mother's and Wives Matter

Proverbs 31:10-11, NIV

"A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies. Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value."

Mothers and wives are valuable and matter. Mothers matter to their children.

Proverbs 1:8

"Listen, my child, to what your father teaches you. Don't neglect your mother's teaching."

The problem today is that young people are neglecting the teaching of their mothers because they are listening to the world. Would you like to be blessed as a young person? Stop ignoring the instructions of your mothers. Learn to draw out her teachings.

Proverbs 20:5, NLT2

"Though good advice lies deep within her heart, a person with understanding will draw it out."

Ephesians 6:1-3, NKJV

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right."

Obedying your parents is not an option; this is a command. You have the opportunity to choose; you don't have the option to choose the outcome. If you want your life to go better and longer on earth, you will follow your mother's teachings and obey your parents.

The Challenge

- What can you do for your parents to show you they hold value to you?



What is the Purpose of a Family?

Genesis 2:18, NKJV

"And the Lord said, 'It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.'"

The family was God's idea. Because it was God's idea, it will always be around.

You were created with the need for deep relationships and caring for people in your life.

The family is a place to weather the storms together. If you don't learn to weather the storms together, your relationships will wither.

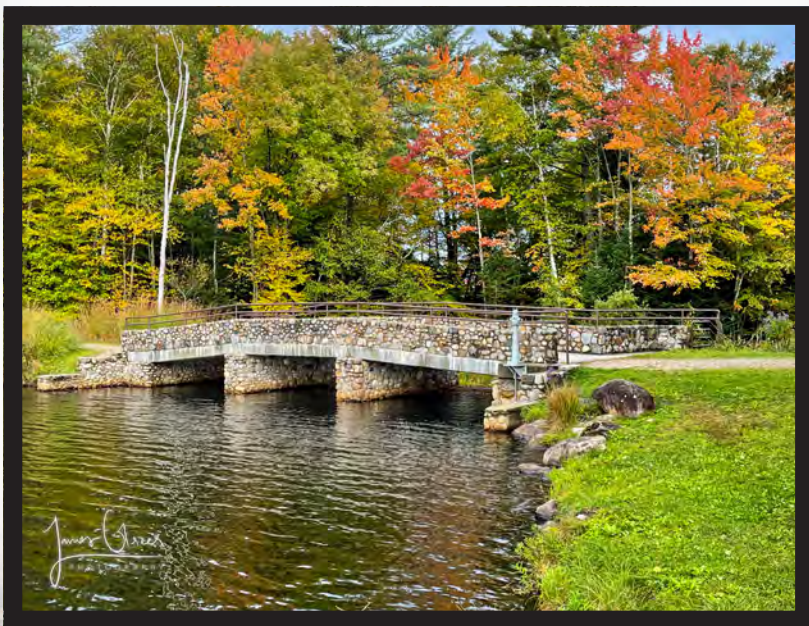
The family is to be a place of refuge. If the family is not a place of refuge, those within the family will feel rejected and often look for refuge in the wrong places. Storms will come; the difference is who you allow going through them with you.

Matthew 7:24-27, NKJV

"Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall."

The Challenge

- Who are you going to for refuge? Go to God; He is always the right place and person.



How to Restore Harmony in the Home

There are five common areas of conflict in every marriage: Money, sex, having children, communication, and the in-laws. Conflict is common, but correctly handling conflict is not common. Conflicts are going to happen. Learn how to manage them correctly.

Mark 3:25, TEV

"If a family divides itself into groups which fight each other, that family will fall apart."

Mark 3:25, TLB

"A home filled with strife and division destroys itself."

All are born into sin and born with troubles. Here are three things you can do to restore conflict in your home:

1. Focus more on the cure than the conflict.
2. Take a break from the conflict and pour equity into the relationship.
3. Be the first to humble yourself.

Romans 12:2, NKJV

"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

**If you want fewer hassles and more harmony,
focus on being transformed.**

The Challenge

- Is there conflict in your home right now? What can you do to humble yourself first and focus on the cure to pour equity into the relationship?



How to Handle Conflict Correctly

Jesus wants you to have fewer conflicts.

1 Corinthians 14:33, NKJV

"For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints."

How do you usually react to conflict? It's usually one of five ways:

1. My way - "I win."
2. No way - "I withdraw."
3. Your way - "It's always your way."
4. Halfway - "You compromise, I give in a little."
5. Our way - "We work out mutual goals together."

Learn to fight fair.

**Learning to handle conflict correctly
is the tunnel to intimacy.**

The goal of conflict is not to win and have victory but to resolve the dispute. Learn to make anger work for you, not against you.

The resolution to conflict:

1. Become a Christian.
2. Let the Holy Spirit rule your heart.
3. Talk to God about the conflicts.
4. Analyze the problem.
5. Switch your focus.

The Challenge

- What resolution do you need to make today? Ask the Lord to reveal it to you so you can have fewer conflicts as Jesus so desires.



Do You Have the Word or the World as Your Ultimate Authority?

1 Corinthians 14:33, NKJV

"For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints."

Jesus does not want chaos, he wants calmness.

John 1:1, NKJV

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

The Word has to be the Authority, not the world.

**The more of God's Word you know,
the more of God's will you know.**

4 Reasons God's Word is the Ultimate Authority:

1. God cannot lie.
2. God's Word will not change.
3. God's Word is alive and powerful.
4. God will never leave you.

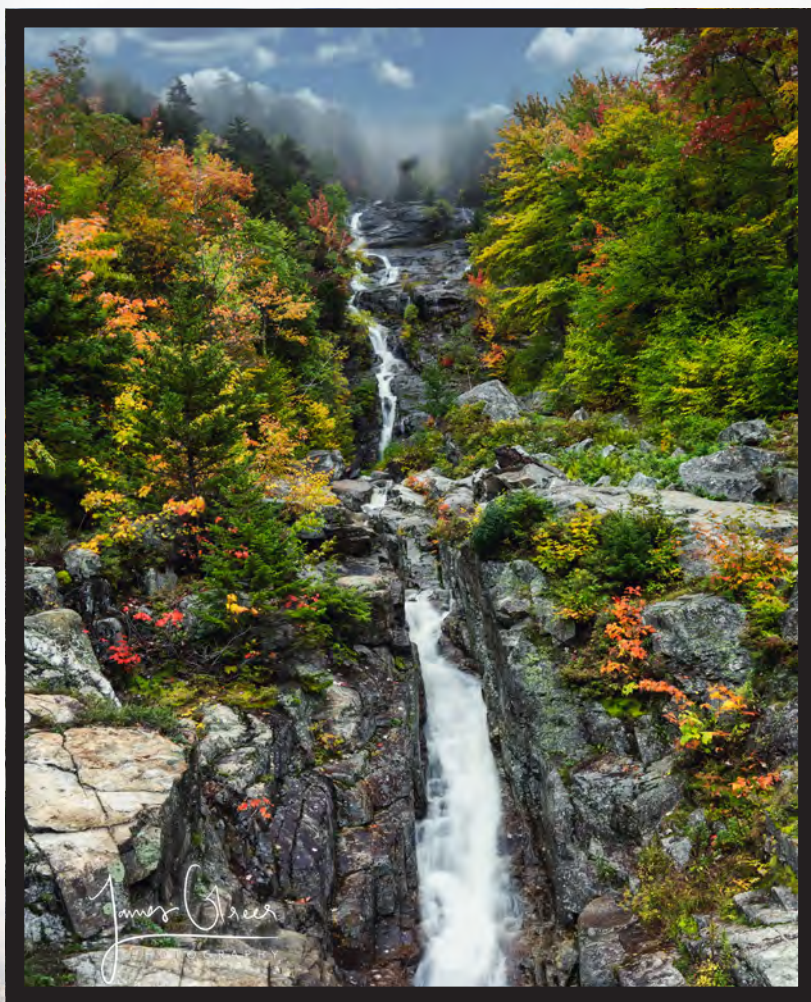
Hebrews 4:12, NKJV

"For the Word of God is living and powerful..."

The Word of God is alive and powerful. It's powerful enough to take care of your greatest and most profound need. Plug into the promises that produce power.

The Challenge

- In what ways are you allowing the world to influence you?
 - What area do you need to ask God to bless you today?
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The Danger of Misplaced Passion

Judges 14 tells of 7 Stupid Steps that Samson made:

1. He went to the wrong place.
2. He was looking for the wrong thing.
3. He rejected Godly counsel.
4. He continued an inappropriate relationship.
5. He compromised his commitment.
6. He ignored his weaknesses.
7. He wanted revenge rather than repentance.

Judges 16:21

"Then the Philistines seized him, gouged out his eyes, and took him down to Gaza. Binding him with bronze shackles, they set him to grinding grain in prison."

Judges 16:28-30

"Then Samson prayed to the Lord, 'Sovereign Lord, remember me, Please, God, strengthen me just once more, and let me with one blow get revenge on the Philistines for my two eyes. Then Samson reached toward the two central pillars on which the temple stood. Bracing himself against them, his right hand on the one and his left hand on the other. Samson said, 'Let me die with the Philistines!' Then he pushed with all his might, and down came the temple on the rulers and all the people in it. Thus he killed many more when he died than while he lived °"

God still used Samson at the end of his life. Passion can be powerful when used right, but passion can be paralyzing and can bring pain.

**Passion is not a personality;
it's perseverance during persecution.**

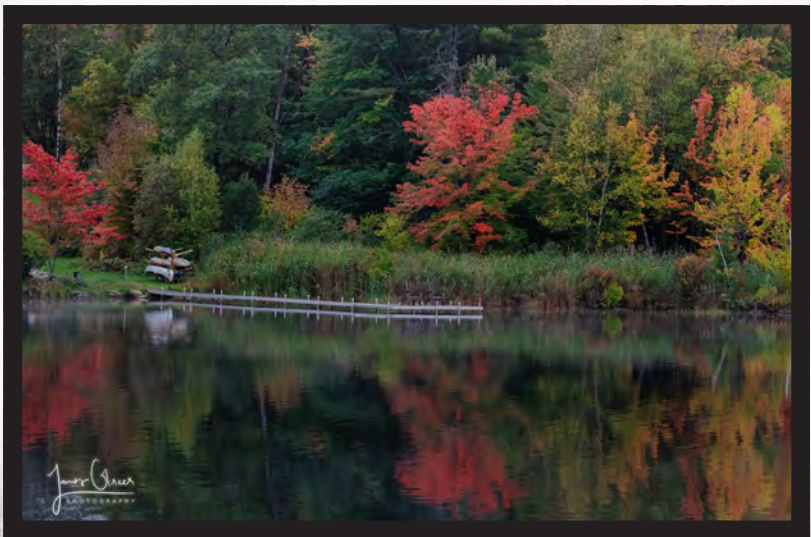
Samson had a type of dangerous, misplaced passion. Jesus is the best example of the right passion; He persevered on the cross.

Where is your passion today? If your passion is misplaced, you're missing out on the peace and joy God has for you. You're missing out on seeking first the Kingdom of God, which meets every need in your life.

Wrong passion and mistaking lust for love resulted in spiritual blindness and physical blindness over Samson.

The Challenge

- Is there a sinful desire God is calling you to repent so you can have a time of refreshing? (Maybe it's your hobby, the opposite sex, the wrong person or perhaps it's a passion for the same-sex attraction)
 - Repent and be refreshed.
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Are the Right People in Your Life?

1 Corinthians 11:3, NKJV

"But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God."

Adam, in Genesis 3:1-6, should not have allowed Eve to continue her conversation with the devil. Are there some people you or your wife should not be spending time with?

How to know who the right people are in your life and your spouse's life:

1. Do they motivate you to love God more?
2. Do they celebrate God's blessings in your life?
3. Do they have your back?
4. Do they hold you accountable out of love and friendship?
5. Do they live what they believe?
6. Do they have the right people in their own lives?

2 Corinthians 6:14, NKJV

"Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?"

Proverbs 18:24, ESV

"A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother."

The Challenge

- If your friends do not have God in the middle of their lives, you need to invite them out of your life. You will never have the fellowship with them that you need and want.
- Will you replace wrong friends with right friends?



How to Find Healing

Psalms 60:2-4, TLB

"But you have given a banner to rally to; all who love truth will rally to it; then you can deliver your beloved people. Use your strong right arm to rescue us."

Jehovah Nissi is one of God's names. He is your banner, your victory, the One who can go before you, be with you, lead you, and rescue you. What is needed is a rallying person and His name is Jesus. Rally to His plan for healing.

God's Plan for Healing:

1. Humbly Confess Sin.
2. Seek His Face.
3. Turn Back to God Completely.
4. Pray Sincerely.

The problem is people spend more time accusing others and excusing ourselves rather than practicing humility.

**To have healing, it has to start with you,
not those you disagree with.**

Don't just seek God's blessing, His gifts, or His favor... but seek Him.

The Challenge

- Ask God to show you anything in your life that is displeasing to Him!



It's All About the Heart

Ecclesiastes 8:1, NCV

"No one is like the wise person who can understand what things mean."

How to have a clean heart:

1. Ask God for it. God and His Word are the cleaning agents. A clean heart has to be created and maintained for the rest of your life.

**The further away you are from God's presence,
the further away from lasting joy.**

2. The key is learning to stay close to God's presence. To have joy restored, you have to have had it. Once you have it, you will want it again. God not only wants joy restored, but He will also restore it. Where sin abounds, grace abounds much more; confess, accept God's forgiveness, get your priorities right where God can restore your joy.

Psalms 51:12, NKJV

"Restore to me the joy of your salvation, And uphold me by Your generous Spirit."

The Challenge

- How is your heart today?
- Will you allow God to restore your joy?



Know God's Dream for Your Life

God does not want you to just survive. He created you to dream, plan and thrive. God is creative, and we are created in His image. We all have creative abilities living within us.

**Without a dream,
you're just surviving, not thriving.**

Proverbs 29:18, KJV

"Where there is no vision, the people perish."

Proverbs 29:18, NCV

"Where there is no word from God, people are uncontrolled, but those who obey what they have been taught are happy."

Uncontrolled people try to survive like animals. When you live like you were created in the image of God, you thrive.

Your real problem might be your need for a Godly dream, not just a dream. If you're not dreaming, you're dying. Spiritually and emotionally, living and dying dramatically depends upon your dreams, and to live those dreams, you need to include Jesus.

Revelation 3:8, NKJV

"I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept my word, and have not denied my name."

The Challenge

- If you don't have a dream, ask God to begin to open and shut the right doors for you and confirm it to you.



The Pleasant or Painful Process

Romans 8:27-28, NKJV

"Now he who searches the heart knows what the mind of the Spirit is because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose."

To dream big, you need to delight in the Lord and commit your ways to Him.

Psalms 37:4-5, NKJV

"Delight yourself also in the Lord, And He shall give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord, Trust also in Him. And He shall bring it to pass."

The process can be pleasant, or the process can be painful. Sometimes pain or disappointment is part of the process and it's the development of the promotion. When you don't understand the process, disappointment will defeat you instead of developing you.

**God's delight is doing impossible things
through improbable people and
giving exceeding grace to undeserving people.**

The Challenge

- Make the step to commit your ways to the Lord and watch Him bring your Godly desires to come about!
- In what areas will you let God work in you to develop you?



God Created You to Thrive

You have to choose to thrive, not just survive. As Adam obeyed the Lord in giving names to all the animals, we must learn to obey Him and be sure we use wisdom in what comes out of our mouths.

Proverbs 18:21, NKJV

"Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit."

Learn to obey God in the little things:

1. Go to church regularly. Don't just go to church, but give and receive encouragement.

Hebrews 10:25, NKJV

"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as in the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching."

2. Tithe. Give 10% of your income.

**It's not what God wants from you,
but what God wants for you.**

3. Read God's Word. The Word of God is where we find our strength.

Matthew 4:4, NKJV

"But He answered and said, 'It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'"

4. Invite others to church. What you love, you talk about. You read what you want to learn about. Talk about what you have learned about Jesus.

The Challenge

- Ask God, "Is there a promise to claim, sin to confess, a commandment to obey, or insight to share with others?"



How to Survive Until You Thrive

You have to understand the developing process. If you don't understand the process, the disappointments will defeat you instead of developing you—the greater the dream, the greater the development.

How you develop will greatly determine our destiny. God has a predetermined destiny that's greater than you can understand or imagine.

Ephesians 3:20

"Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us."

John 14:12-14

"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will also do; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to my Father."

As you learn to survive during the times of being processed or developed, that, in turn, will allow you to endure until you thrive.

Many times, what people call disappointments are most often tests or times of development. These are the times God is teaching us to trust Him.

**The right response under pressure +
responsibility = maturity, the right development
and the right promotion.**

Insights to Remember

1. If you have big dreams, be careful who you share them with.
2. The greater the dream, the greater the development.
3. The longer it takes you to develop, the longer you have to go through the process or test.
4. Total dependence on God leads to the proper process in developing you to be used by God.

The Challenge

- Make the decision to become dependent on God.
 - Ask God to care for you.
 - Ask God to develop you?.
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How are Dreams Shattered?

The only real power Satan has over you is to get you to believe his lies. He uses what you can see, feel, think and hear to bring about fear and discouragement. Satan wants you to take things into your own hands and try to handle them. Don't fall into Satan's trap, learn to wait on the Lord and allow God to fight your battles.

Psalm 27:14, NKJV

"Wait on the Lord; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the Lord!"

Isaiah 40:31, NKJV

"But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint."

Trust God's Word instead of what you see, think or feel.

No one can shatter your dreams but you.

The Challenge

- Where do you need to develop more strength in your life?



It's Never Too Late

If you're alive, God is not done!

2 Samuel 4:4, NKJV

Mephibosheth was King Saul's grandson who had been dropped at a young age while fleeing for his life. He developed a disability and became crippled. Mephibosheth was brought to Lo Debar. Lo Debar was an out of the way place where there was no pasture, nothing grows and no communication.

Mephibosheth's dreams were shattered. He was fearful and hurting. He went from a palace to being paralyzed and almost to a prison of hiding.

God had bigger plans. He sent David, a man after God's own heart, to find and bless Mephibosheth.

2 Samuel 9:1-8, NKJV

Do you feel as though you are in a Lo Debar?

**It's never too late for God to
restore you and use you!**

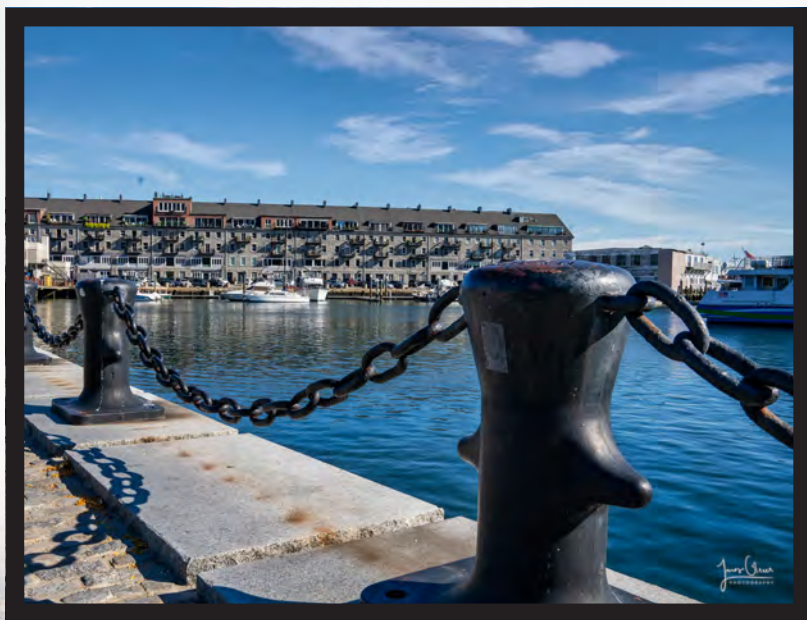
Just as David restored everything Mephibosheth lost, God wants to restore your life and more.

Joel 2:25, NKJV

"So I will restore to you the years that the swarming locusts have eaten, the crawling locust, the consuming locust, and the chewing locust, My great army which I sent among you."

The Challenge

- Allow God to restore you.



Listen and Go Forward

Setbacks are caused, many times, by decisions you've made. Sometimes setbacks are caused decisions others have made. The actions of others will and do affect us, but remember, only you can keep God from using you in a great way. Only you can keep yourself from listening to and heeding Godly counsel.

After a setback, if you belong to God and worship Him, cheer up and be ready to listen. If you claim to belong to God but don't worship Him, that's where the trouble comes in.

Exodus 34:14, NKJV

"for you shall worship no other god, for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God,"

When we don't worship God, it's called idolatry.

How do you know what an idol is?

- When you're in pain, you go to the idol.
- When you have a need, you go to the idol.
- When you're hurt, you go to the idol.
- When you celebrate, you go to the idol.

It takes repeated intentional awareness and action to stay away from idolatry and continue to worship the true living God. - JWG

The Challenge

- Ask God if you have anything you are putting in His place as an idol. Tell Jesus you want Him to meet your physical, emotional, financial, and spiritual needs.



Overloaded and Overwhelmed?

Matthew 11:28-30, MSG

"Are you tired, worn out, and burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me – watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me, and you'll learn to live freely and lightly."

God created you with a rhythm; He wants you to walk and work with Him. God wants you to watch what He can do.

In today's society, there's easy access to media (TV, Phones, Internet). This instant access allows you to take in so much information that your body and mind can't handle it. This can get you overloaded and overwhelmed.

God doesn't want you to spend too much time watching and learning the things of the world. He wants you to learn His Word. Stop trying to save yourself through worldly means. The world can't offer what only God can give.

Stress comes from striving; Biblical striving is trying to do what only God can do for you and others. (JWG)

When you have positional and personal righteousness, you have peace and power with God.

You get positional righteousness at salvation; Jesus died for it. You can't strive for personal righteousness, but you can ask God for it.

Don't get out of the rhythm God has for you.

**If you get out of rhythm, remember,
God's mercies are new every morning.**

The Challenge

- Commit to stop stressing/striving and start thriving.
 - Receive God's mercy.
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Get Out of Misery

When you're God's child, there will be miserable times of pain now and then.

Many Christians are in misery because they have left the place God had them in. Sometimes it's better to stay where you're at. Take the Word of God, sow it in where you're at, and stay right where you are.

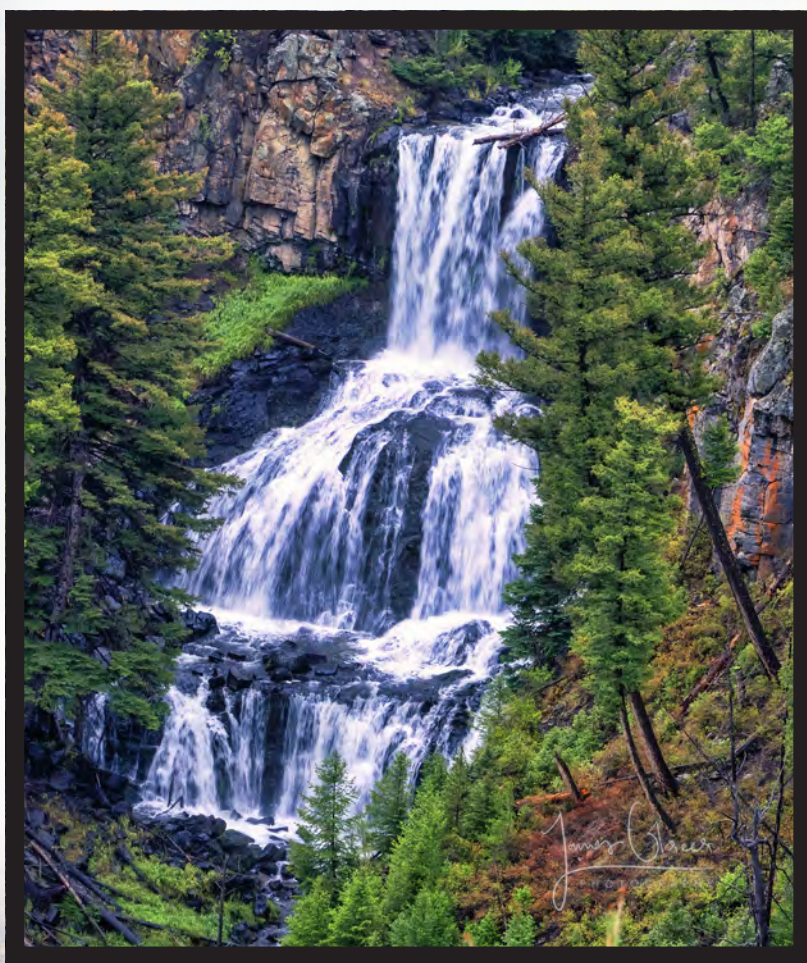
Misery will come, but don't stay there. Many Christians may remain in misery because they are held captive by the bad habits they have created.

**Bad habits can be destructive and
can keep you miserable.
The proper habits will keep you on track.**

The Challenge

Learn from God's good habits and apply them.

- God celebrated His accomplishments. (Genesis 1:1-3)
 - God accepted and allowed help. (Genesis 2:19-20)
 - God rested. (Genesis 2:1-3)
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DEVOTION 37

Why Do So Many Christians Live in Shame?

Shame can lead you to blame, which is lame!

The absence of shame and guilt in your life is based on what Jesus did, nor what you did or did not do. Don't live in condemnation or shame.

Romans 8:1, NKJV

"There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit."

If something is convicting you, confess it. Conviction is for confession.

1 John 1:9, NKJV

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Remembering what you did is for your protection. Guilt is from the devil and is a lie.

Learn to live in the freedom that Jesus offers.

Enter into the reality that Christ is near you and with you.

The Challenge

- Jesus accepts you, loves you, and wants you to accept and love yourself. Will you accept and love yourself starting today?



Fighting Joy

3 Things that fight joy:

1. Selfishness. Selfishness robs joy and brings disorder instead of order. Selfishness always brings sadness.
2. Bitterness robs joy. How you learn to deal with hurt will significantly determine your joy. Hurting people hurt people. People that hurt people end up lonely.
3. Fear robs joy. The promise of God's protection can keep us from fear. Think on God's Promises and His Word;

Don't leave God out of your thinking!

Fear God instead of man.

3 Things that fight for joy:

1. Focus on giving instead of getting.

Acts 20:35

"I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

2. Focus on healing instead of hurting.

Colossians 3:12-13, NKJV

"Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, long-suffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do."

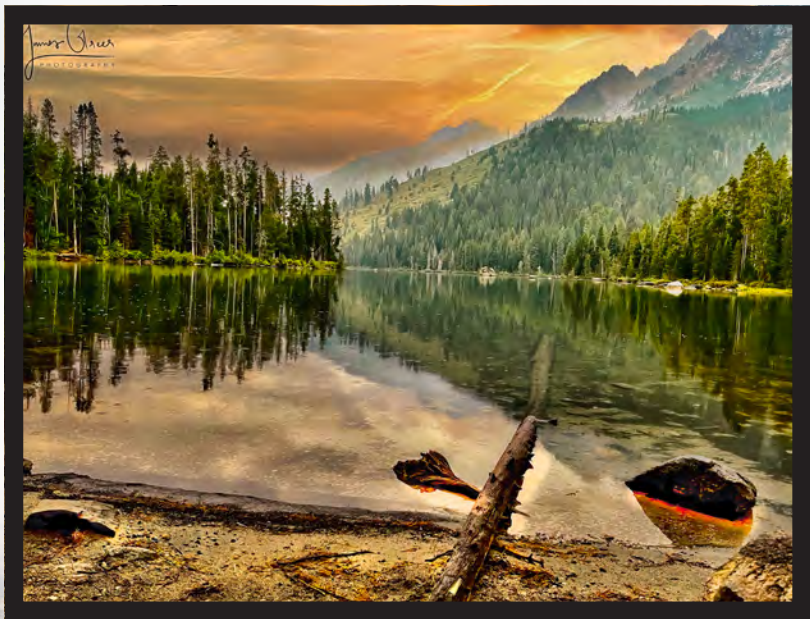
3. Focus on God's power instead of your problems.

Psalms 62:8, NKJV

"Trust in Him at all times, you people; Pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us."

The Challenge

- Have you allowed selfishness, bitterness, and fear to rob your joy? Don't rehearse the hurt; reverse the hurt.
- Generosity/giving defeats and overcomes selfish desire. How can you be generous?



What Aren't More Couples Happy?

Many times, couples forget what it was like to be alone. You forget that our mate is God's second most incredible gift. Remember, you did not get married out of obligation, but out of opportunity.

Marriage is usually more complex than people think. A happy marriage takes a lot of continuous work. The two become one until death does you part. Marriage is a long-term commitment and covenant. Today, most people are short-term-minded. God's Word says to do good to others, especially those closest to you.

Because of easy access to drugs and alcohol, lives and marriages are destroyed today more than ever. Acting like there is not a problem is not the answer. Confessing and praying is the starting place.

James 5:16

"Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much." -

Don't take in wrong and incorrect information from social media. Don't talk to the wrong people about your problems.

Spend less time on social and false media and more time on the truth of God's Word.

The Challenge:

- This week, look for ways to do good to your mate or for your mate.
- Search God's Word if you have a problem, not the Internet or social media.



Be Part of God's Army

You are commissioned, called and appointed to do be part of God's army. You are to seek, serve, and save!

The Lord is a man of war, and He is looking for warriors to join His army. You still have to fight when you're in the Lord's army, but you cannot lose the war.

3 Steps to Success in God's Army

1. Know who you are fighting. When fighting with God, not only are the battles won, but you also learn to enjoy the fight.
2. Know your Purpose. Your purpose is to seek, serve, and save.

Luke 19:10, NIV

"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."

Mark 10:45, NIV

"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

3. Know who you are fighting for. You are fighting for the souls and lives of your loved ones.

Once you are saved, your God given purpose is the help further His Kingdom and assisting others to find their way into the Kingdom.

The Challenge

- Are you ready to join God’s Army and fulfill your God given purpose?



It's Never Too Late for a Miracle

A miracle is a change in a person, situation, or circumstance that only God can achieve and only God can explain.

We need to be in the right place. One of the most important things you can do is go to church with an attitude to anticipation of what God is going to do.

**Anticipation + Participation + Preparation =
Expectations Met.**

Ephesians 3:20-21, NKJV

"Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen."

You need to look to Jesus. Jesus sees our needs; He sees our condition and knows how long we've been in that condition. Jesus is the right person to bring about a miracle. Jesus wants to see you change.

John 5:5-6, NKJV

"Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he already had been in that condition a long time, He said to him, 'Do you want to be made well?'"

The Challenge

Three big questions to ask yourself:

- 1. Do you need a miracle?
- 2. Do you want a miracle?
- 3. Are you willing to do what it takes to get the miracle?



God's Army Mission and Ministry

1. Minister as you go and where you go.
2. Serve with Joy. The longer you are a Christian, the easier it is to forget where you came from and how Jesus forgave you.
3. Be generous. The proper response to radical grace is radical generosity.
4. Salvation has come to your house (life). You are saved by grace.

**If you are saved, you will serve, give,
and seek to see others saved.**

5. Seek, serve, and save those who are lost. You need to know your mission and allow it to lead a day-to-day lifestyle of ministering.

Luke 19:10, NKJV

"For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

The Challenge

1. Look for those in need wherever you go.
 2. Do your work with Joy.
 3. Radically give above your tithe.
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When Should You Give Up on a Miracle?

Psalms 130:5, NKJV

"I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in His Word I do hope."

When looking for a miracle, Jesus says don't lose heart. Hope is the confident expectation of a positive future despite your present circumstances. When you start relying on what you or others can do, you will lose hope, lose heart and become discouraged.

Rely on what God can and will do. Wait on the Lord, be encouraged and allow God to strengthen your heart. Wait for the Lord in His Word and have a confident expectation that the Lord's help is on the way.

Psalms 27:13, NKJV

"I would have lost heart unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living."

Luke 18:3-5, NKJV

"Now there was a widow in that city, and she came to him, saying, 'Get justice for me from my adversary.' And he would not for a while; but afterward, he said within himself, 'Though I do not fear God nor regard man, yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.'"

**Miracles come when you
are helpless and hopeless.**

The Godly can influence the ungodly when God is ready to work a miracle in their heart. God is the God of all hearts, Godly and ungodly.

God will always do His part. The only miracle God won't do in your life is the one that's outside of the will of God.

John 16:33, NKJV

"These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world, you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

The Challenge

- If God has not told you to stop praying, hoping, and believing, get excited... today might be the day for your miracle.



The Misery of a Miracle

Sometimes you bring misery on yourself and sometimes it takes a taskmaster to be in our lives before we ask for help. A taskmaster is a master of burdens, a person appointed by the enemy (Satan) and allowed by God to bring burdens, toils, and great weariness.

The purpose of the taskmaster is to crush our spirit of pride to bring us to the point of misery, mentally and emotionally, so that we will call out to God for a miracle.

Could it be that God wants to do a miracle in your life and is waiting on you to humble your spirit and call out to Him for help?

Exodus 3:7, NKJV

"And the Lord said: 'I have surely seen the oppression of my people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters, for I know their sorrows.'"

**God sees your condition, hears your prayers
and has the power to bring change.**

The Challenge

- Is God waiting on you to humble your spirit and call out on Him for help?



42 Days or 42 Years, the Choice is Yours

The children of Israel had been set free to cross the desert and go to the promised land full of milk and honey in 42 days, but because of self-imposed misery, it took 42 years.

At the first test of freedom, the Israelites failed the test. When you fail a test, you have to retake it. God does not test you to hurt you. God wants to help you.

Why did it take the Israelites 42 years instead of 42 days?

1. They blamed God for their problem instead of thanking Him for the miracle.

When you focus on the problem instead of the promise, you miss the power of the promise: the miracle.

2. They blamed Moses, their leader. Moses stood up for the Israelites when they would not stand up for themselves. It does not matter who your leader is and who you follow, but it does matter who's the umbrella of protection you are under.
3. They kept wanting to live in the past. The children of Israel kept looking back when God wanted to bring them forward.

4. They underestimated what God had already given them to bring the miracle about. God has already given you what you need to move forward and bring the miracle about. It's not that you need more to move forward to have a miracle. You need God's blessing upon what you have now.

1 Peter 1:6-7, NKJV

"In this, you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

The Challenge

- Will you ask God to bless what He has given you?



How Can the Ordinary go to Extraordinary?

When the ordinary get the extraordinary message, they are often afraid. The opposite of fear is love.

1 John 4:18, NKJV

"There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love."

God does not want you to be afraid because He has brought you good tidings of great joy. God sent His Son here to earth to protect, provide, and die for you and me. God has already prepared good news and great joy beyond the imagination for those who love Jesus and those who are saved.

**God does not see you as you are,
but as you can be.**

What God promises, He performs no matter what. Find a promise and allow God to perform a miracle.

How to experience Jesus in a personal and powerful way.

1. He has to be your Savior.
2. He has to be your Lord.
3. You have to seek Him.
4. Be used by Him.

2 Chronicles 26:5, NKJV

"He sought God in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding in the visions of God; and as long as he sought the Lord, God made him prosper."

The Challenge

- This week, invite someone with you to church.
- Ask God how He wants to use you. Tell God, "I'm willing to be used."
- Read God's Word and ask Him to speak to you. Thank God for the greatest gift of all, His Son Jesus Christ.
- Will you commit to experiencing Jesus in a personal and powerful way?



Let His Light Shine

Follow the Star.

Matthew 2:1-6, NKJV

"Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod, the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, 'Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the east and have come to worship Him.'"

When there is darkness, what you want most is Light. When going from point A to point B, you need Light, guidance and direction most. One of the reasons God sent His Son is so that we would not have to live and walk in darkness.

John 1:4-5, NKJV

"In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it."

Jesus is the Light of the world. He is the One you accept as Lord and Savior of your life.

Darkness can't overcome you because you have the Light living in your heart.

Learn to let the light shine.

The Challenge

- Pray and ask God to give you the guidance and direction you need.
- Ask God to let the Light shine through you to overcome the darkness in your life.



The Battle Plan for Victory

The direction in your life greatly determines whether you are delivered or destroyed. If you want to be blessed and have the abundant life Jesus offers, you have to be willing to follow the direction Jesus gives.

John 10:10, NKJV

"The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life and that they may have it more abundantly."

The devil wants to destroy; God wants to deliver.

It's important to know God's Word. That's how you can hear from God. Knowing God's Word helps you see where the devil is trying to work and where God is trying to deliver. God is always one step ahead of the devil and is more powerful than him. God wants to give you what you need to have victory over the devil.

Matthew 2:14, NKJV

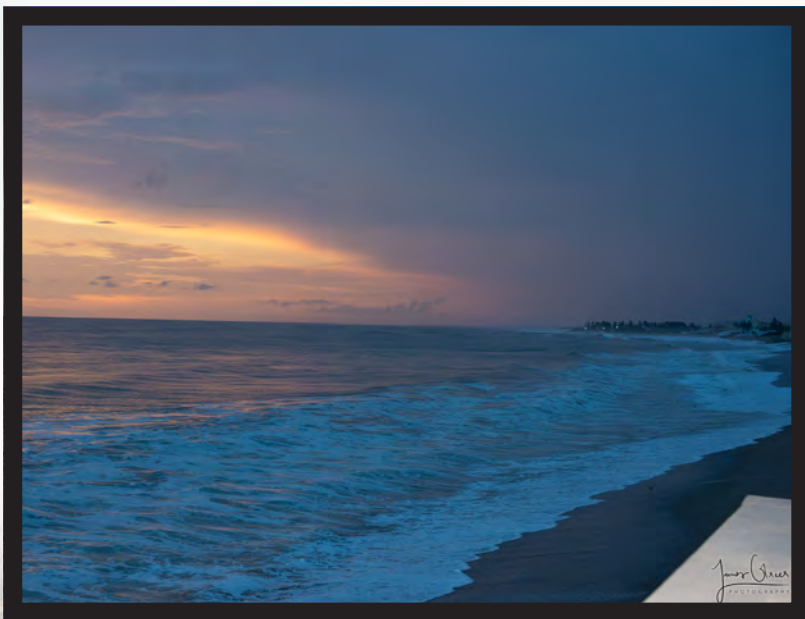
"When he arose, he took the young child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt..."

God may be trying to use someone in your life to warn you or help you. Are you listening to them? God used Joseph to be part of Jesus' deliverance and to defeat Satan.

**God knows what you need
before it ever comes about.**

The Challenge

- Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you.
- Pray, "Holy Spirit, what would you have me do? What would you have me stop doing? Who would you have me witness, too? What sin would you have me confess?"



From Pain to Praise

The best thing that you can do is believe that Jesus can help you. There is nothing too hard for the Lord.

Mark 10:27, NKJV

"But Jesus looked at them and said, 'With men, it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible.'"

With God, all things are possible if you can learn the Word, live the Word and apply the Word.

Luke 1:37, NKJV

"For with God, nothing will be impossible."

No person's heart is too hard to change.

No person's life is too late to change. No marriage is too far gone—no child has strayed too far and no financial problem is too big. With God, nothing is impossible.

Sin paralyzes. This applies to the Christians and non-Christians. Christians are saved from the penalty of sin, but not the powers of sin. You have no power over sin until you have Jesus in you, with you and for you.

The Challenge

- You may be allowing sin to keep you paralyzed, defeated or discouraged. The good news is that your life can change today. Ask Jesus to forgive you of your sin, be free and get up and walk!

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Struggling with God and Others

Genesis 32:22-24, NKJV

"And he arose that night and took his two wives, his two female servants, and his eleven sons, and crossed over the ford of Jabbok. He took them, sent them over the brook, and sent over what he had."

Think of your most significant conflict or struggle. There are two fundamental issues:

1. Will you obey God and do the right thing in the situation?
2. Will you trust God to take care of this situation? This is the root of all your problems and struggles.

You want to be in control. You want to be the master of your faith. You want to be in charge and call the shots.

God allows you to struggle with the crisis until you are ready to obey Him, do what's right and let Him be in control.

Why does God allow these struggles if He loves you so much?

People seldom change until the pain becomes more significant than the fear of change.

The Challenge

- Will you surrender to God? When you surrender to God, God can then bless you.



DEVOTION 51

The Miracle of Your Faith = The Miracle of Your Dreams

Romans 4:3, NLT

"for the Scriptures tell us, 'Abraham believed God, and God counted him as righteous because of his faith.'"

Good works are not what saves you, delivers you or allows God to use you. It's your faith that brings about the miracles of God's promises in your life.

The right relationship with God grows your faith and produces God's promises in your life. When your relationship is right with God, you will want your relationship right with others.

When you don't have the right relationship with God, you want to blame others and complain. When you begin to blame and complain, you not only lose the promises and power in your life, but you greatly affect everyone around you.

Faith is believing God will do whatever He promises.

God wants to bless what is left!

Romans 4:20, NLT

"Abraham never wavered in believing God's promise. His faith grew stronger, and in this, he brought glory to God. He was fully convinced that God can do whatever He promises."

The Challenge

- What is keeping you from allowing God to use you?
Are you still blaming and complaining?
- Claim God's promises in your life!



Why Do Some People Choose Pride Over Humility?

We choose not to trust in God and His Word, but instead to trust in ourselves and the world. It always comes down to the Word or the World.

Hosea 4:6, NKJV

"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge..."

When you choose to do it your way instead of God's way, it's called rebellion.

1 Samuel 15:23, NKJV

"Rebellion is as sinful as witchcraft, and stubbornness as bad as worshipping idols. So because you have rejected the command of the Lord, he has rejected you as king."

Rebellion often happens because of fear, for pleasure, or because of pride.

Rebellion always results in ruin and is the devil's representative. Rebellion leads to hellion.

2 Corinthians 10:6, TLB

"I will use these weapons against every rebel who remains after I have first used them on you yourselves and you surrender to Christ."

The cure for rebellion is surrender and submission. When we surrender to God, He wins, so we win.

The Challenge

- Do you submit and surrender to God and those God has placed over you?





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