

Blessed Transgressions™

THE ONLINE CHRISTIAN MAGAZINE

The Measure of An Aging Woman

PLUS: Nourish Your Soul Each
Time You Read the Bible

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The Measure of An Aging Woman



By Linda Gill

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Just what is the measure of a woman who has grown to an old age? When the joints hurt doing simple household chores? When she feels unable to help herself or those she cares about? What if she lives in a total care facility — even has to wear a diaper?

Or when Dementia or Alzheimer's or a stroke or heart attack has taken the mind or abilities away? From a physical standpoint, old age seems immeasurable.

The world measures by physical beauty — slender figure, wholesome complexion, youthful hair color and agility. When so much of that worldly beauty changes, what is there to measure? Gray hairs...

wrinkles, poor eyesight, hearing loss, protruding belly, mental slowness? The world's yardstick is tough on her. The moral and spiritual character often is torn asunder. Yet, God measures differently.

Creator God made His children in His Image. Can one allow the world to be the judge? God is Judge — He sets the standard. No other. Beginning to end, He sustains, carries, and promises.

“Listen to me, O house of Jacob, all the remnant of the house of Israel, who have been borne by me from before your birth, carried from the womb; even to your old age I am He, and to gray hairs I will carry you. I have made, and I will bear; I will carry and will save.” (Isaiah 46:3-4 ESV)

“LORD, make me to know my end, And what is the measure of my days, that I may know how frail I am.” (Psalm 39:4 NKJV)

We are all called to grow in wisdom, in character, in faithfulness, in holiness, in love. As a woman grows older, God continues His call for her to mature more fully. The body is decaying. One day, she will return to dust. Yet the heart of God living within her never grows old, never decays. How glorious! We are learning from experiences, adding to...

our knowledge bank, adjusting judgments, acting with soundness and obedience, following His call to be holy as He is holy. Loving unconditionally are marks of our growing maturity.

“So teach us to number our days,
That we may gain a heart of wisdom.”

(Psalm 90:12 NKJV)

“Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy,
for I am the LORD your God.” (Leviticus 20:7 NKJV)

The beauty of a woman is not merely her outward appearance. Her true beauty shines from her heart, especially as she ages, having gained spiritual wisdom.

The quiet, gentle, meek spirit is not a fearful spirit, nor subdued or shy. It is a mild disposition that trusts in God's goodness and His control over life's situations. By wholly relying upon Him, He grows and purifies those who follow.

“Your adornment must not be merely external-braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.” (1 Peter 3:3-4 NASB)

God has set His child apart, sanctifying her. She is to protect her mind (that place of understanding, feeling, and desire) by caring about what enters in and what exits out.

She is to keep her thoughts pure. She is to raise up her children well, be respectful and submissive to her husband, be prayerful, hospitable, a servant to the least, be sober, and obedient. She is to lean completely and set her hope solely upon the LORD rather than the world. God will guide and strengthen her as she walks the path to holiness.

“You shall consecrate yourselves therefore and be holy, for I am the LORD your God.” (Leviticus 20:7 NASB)

God measures in His own way as He is the Only Ruler. He is looking for much. He expects much. He loves much. God uses godly women to exemplify His character. Sarah knew her duty as a wife, honoring and revering Abraham, following him submissively to a land they knew not.

As a woman, she certainly made her share of mistakes, yet God honored her. Anna, of an elderly age, was cared for by God in the temple.

She served her God by praying and fasting, praising and...


thanking Him. God blessed her with the ability to see beyond human walls; thus, Anna knew the Messiah when He entered the temple as an infant. Holiness shines through these women who sought God.

“For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, being submissive to their own husbands; just as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear.” (1 Peter 3:5-6 NASB)

“And there was a prophetess, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years and had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, and then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple, serving night and day with fastings and prayers. At that very moment she came up and began giving thanks to God, and continued to speak of Him to all those who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.” (Luke 2:36-38 NASB)

The measure of an aging woman is the crown of glory she wears because of the life she has and will lead—the life of righteousness, doing that which is right, wholesome, and holy. The beauty of her heart is by the grace of God.

The Holy Spirit grows the inner person, magnifying the character of God. She wears a quiet, gentle spirit, a temper easily controlled, with a lack of pride, a becoming behavior towards all, even toward herself. She is lovely from the inside-out with a strength born of God. **A woman's worth is measured in godly increments.**

May we walk in Your holiness, LORD, in Your mercy and love. We pray that our adornment be Your grace and Your virtue. May the world we touch be able to see You in us, beyond the earrings, the makeup, and the clothing. It is the holiness, devotion, honor, reverence to You that needs to be seen and measured. May our crown be gracefully worn in our graying years because we have known You, grown in You during our youth and mid years. May we be thankful for each gray hair, LORD, and may we be precious in Your sight, worthy of Your love. Amen. 

Infidelity and Restoration: My Story



By Shannon Geurin

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Infidelity and restoration typically aren't usually used in the same sentence because, well, it's almost impossible to be restored after infidelity strikes a marriage. Right? I mean, that's what the world says, isn't it? Well, my story is different.

My story is a story of fear, betrayal, heartbreak, and Jesus. And the latter is the most important part. John and I celebrated 25 years of marriage in June. This man I love with all of my heart, soul, and mind. He is my everything second only to Jesus.

But after 15 years of marriage, I betrayed him in such a way that nearly wrecked and destroyed both of us. Nevertheless, what Satan meant for pure evil, God has turned in to something very beautiful.

Young and in love.

I was 19 and he was 20 when we married. We were young and in love. Six years later we were blessed by a beautiful big lipped baby girl that we named Alex Elizabeth. Two and a half years later Averee Grace was born with eyes blue as the sky.

About a year after Averee was born, John's best friend suddenly died and it completely rocked our world. He and John had plans. They were going to open a business together and had already done most of the research to get started.

Our families were close. We spent vacations and holidays together. It was a very traumatic time not only for us, but of course their family as well. He had left a wife and three small children behind.

Fast forward two years and John had another best friend that suddenly died. Same situation. We were close and spent vacations together. He left a wife and two small children behind.

Fear of death.

As crazy as this sounds, after this happened I knew that I would be next. I mean, why wouldn't I be? John has a pretty extensive family history of heart disease. Surely he will die soon, and I too will be left to take care of two small children.

I started living out of fear and I just had to figure out a way to become independent. I needed to learn how to take care of myself and my two girls without leaning on John. This was a gradual process and it was something that just happened over time. I didn't "set out" to become independent, it just happened.

And it was wrong.

Aside from that, I had completely left my heavenly Father out. I had forgotten to put my trust in Him. There were parts of me that I just hadn't given over to Him.

This was the beginning of my failure. **Fear.** I let fear in and allowed it to control my mind and thoughts.

I needed to be able to take care of myself. That fear flourished inside of me and taught me how to not need my husband. That fear caused there to be a crack in the door of our marriage. And Satan slivered his way through.

I opened the door of my heart to another man. This led to an emotional affair and then a physical affair that literally almost destroyed me and my husband and our two girls.

I'm going to stop right here and say to you – if you are flirting with this temptation STOP RIGHT NOW.

It's not worth it. I'm telling you, it's NOT worth it!

Furthermore, it's NEVER God's will to break up a family. NEVER. If you're involved in a relationship like this then STOP. It is NEVER God's will for you to leave your spouse to be with someone else.

NEVER.

I betrayed my husband. The one who my soul has always loved. The one who I promised to cherish and love all the days of my life. The one who makes up half of my beautiful girls' heart.

This beautiful man, I betrayed. When the affair came to light, my husband did not kick me out. He should have... but he didn't. Instead he opened his arms to me. He showed me the love of Jesus. Don't get me wrong... he didn't just roll over. He's a smart guy. He had no idea...

what I would do, and he had to be prepared. The morning after it came to light he got up (he was sleeping upstairs in the guest room), came downstairs and got in the shower as if he was going to work.

I knew he wasn't going to work.

He was going to see an attorney. So, he left that morning. The girls were with my in-laws so I was alone. I remember just laying in my bed in the fetal position not knowing what was going to happen. I called my dad and I told him everything. I felt like I was a teenager again as I listened.

"Shannon, you cut it off! Cut it off RIGHT NOW." He had a conviction in his voice that I had never heard.

He scolded me and told me what a mistake I had made. He spoke truth to me and talked sense to me. Yes, I felt like a teenager again... but it was exactly what I needed, because I certainly hadn't been behaving like a responsible adult.

Gosh — thank you so much Dad... for speaking truth to me. Thank you for not being afraid of the ramifications of how I would react. Thank you for being brave. You have showed me how to be brave. Oh, how I love you Dad.

Can I just tell something?? Speak TRUTH to your loved ones! Speak truth to them even when it will hurt them. And on the flip side — YOU ALLOW OTHERS TO SPEAK TRUTH TO YOU. Speaking truth to others can literally save them! They may not take it well at first, but THEY WILL GET OVER IT.

The Beginning of Restoration.

Later that day I saw Johns car drive in front of our house and pull into the driveway. I walked over to the garage door. I just wanted a hug. I wanted to be in his arms. See, we have this special hug thing that we do.

We've done it our whole marriage.

I walk into his chest and he envelopes his arms all the way around me as if he is shielding me. So, he walks in and I'm standing there. I walk right into his arms and he pulls me close. I whispered, "I love you John."

"I love you too honey."

And at that moment we both knew that we were going to try. Little did we know that this was one of the hardest decisions that we would ever make in our marriage.

Here's the cool part. On the way home John was praying and crying out to God. He asked God to help him know what to do. He asked God for a sign... and when he walks in the door there I am. Our hug was his sign. Seems small and insignificant when looking at the scope, doesn't it?

Only God.

So the girls were staying with my in-laws and we had about four days just to really talk things out and try and move past the initial trauma. Let me say — it would have been SO much easier for both of us just to give up. Infidelity is extremely painful and honestly sometimes it's just too hard to come back from.

The world says it can't be done.

But Jesus... He says I can do ALL things!

Giving up and getting a divorce would have been the easy part for us. Instead of kicking me out John welcomed me in. He showed me love. I had mocked him and spit in his face. I caused him to bleed and I shamed him. Sound familiar? **Matthew 26:67:**

“Then they spit in his face and struck him with their...

...fists. Others slapped him..."

Jesus.

He showed me who Jesus was and for the first time in my life I realized what Jesus Christ did for me on that cross. I've been a Christian and loved Jesus ever since I was a little girl and at the age of 36 I finally understood.

1 Peter 3:18 – Christ suffered for our sins once for all time. He never sinned, but he died for sinners to bring us safely home to God. He suffered physical death, but he was raised to life in the spirit.

The Hard Work.

The days following didn't get better. In fact, they got worse.

I'll never forget the day we picked up our girls. I remember them piling out of the car; Alex's mousey brown hair was just a mess and she had that crinkled up nose smile that she always gives me. Averee's sweet blue eyes just twinkled when she saw me. T

They both ran up to me and hugged me so tight. We hugged for what seemed like the longest time. They had...

no clue. They had absolutely no clue what their momma and daddy was going through. Those sweet babies didn't have a care in the world.

They had no idea that the next couple of years would be the hardest...that it would be an emotional roller coaster. They had no idea their parents were literally fighting the powers of darkness and hell.

So, we decided to make it work, but we were very, very broken. There was SO much to be repaired and so much work to be done. I had broken the heart of my husband and completely severed the relationship I had with many of my friends.

How could I do such a thing? How could I? It wasn't my character to do this. I was in such a state of depression for what I had done. There were many days that I didn't know if I would make it. I just didn't want to live in the shame and regret. It was too hard.

But Jesus...

Can I tell you something else? Never, EVER make this statement: "I would never do that." You know, that saying... "Well, I would neeeever..." Oh Please. I said it and look...

what happened. This thing... thing that I did was the NEVER of all nevers for me. It was my un-doing.

I know what you're thinking. You're wondering why I would disclose something like this online or in public. It's something that's supposed to be kept a secret, right? It's private.

Yeah, I know.

And Satan would love nothing more than for me to keep quiet. God spoke very clearly to me and told me exactly what to do so I'm doing it. What we went through and how God restored us is just too much of a miracle to keep to myself. Honestly it's His story, not mine.

JESUS.

Restoration.

The next three to four years was the most difficult season for us. While we were fighting for our marriage we also each had our own, very personal things to work out.

John had to deal with trust issues and the hurt, anger, and bitterness. I can't really go in to what he went through...

because that is his story... but I will tell you, there were so many layers of deceit and hurt that it is purely a miracle he survived. He is a walking miracle. WE are a walking miracle. OUR KIDS — they are walking miracles.

Thank you Jesus.

And me? Well, I didn't even know who I was anymore. I didn't know how to read my bible. I remember picking it up and not even understanding the words. Sin does that to you — it twists you around and turns you into something that you are not.

Jesus was just foreign to me. It was as if I had never heard of Him or even read the bible. It was weird. The root issue was that I felt unworthy. I felt so unworthy and unlovable. I felt dirty and full of shame. There was absolutely no grace for me and no way back. I would be forever marked as “that woman.”

The healing process for us was extremely crucial and important. Each step had to be taken very carefully. There were so many different layers to our situation. John was completely heartbroken at what I had done. I was heartbroken at what I had done. As I said before, our marriage needed healing, and we each needed individual healing.

I don't know how we would have done it without Jesus and counseling. We had an amazing marriage counselor.

It took about five years for both of us to become completely whole. Five years of blood and sweat. It was hard work. Marriage is hard work y'all. But if you push through the hard times it can be so rewarding.

Maybe you have sin in your heart right now or you are like I was and you are carrying a past sin around... you feel isolated, alone... Jesus isn't afraid to talk about our sin!!! Talk to him about it! Give it to him! Give him your whole heart! Satan WANTS you to feel isolated but if he can get you to feel isolated then he's got you!

So many people tell me that I am brave and courageous. Listen – Jesus made me brave!

No matter what we've been through or what we face, we all have it within ourselves to be BRAVE – to be the person that God designed us to be. Its your decision! Step out of your comfort zone! With HIS courage and HIS strength we CAN make the choices that can CHANGE our circumstances!!!

Where We Are Now

So, has it been worth it? Naturally I guess it seems my answer would be yes. Our family is so happy today. There is pure, genuine, and fierce love. We know what it feels like to almost lose love and we've both tasted death.

We are thankful and we live each and every day out of gratefulness, and hopefully that has been passed down to our girls.

Today our family is a living, breathing miracle. When I think of the grave possibilities that could have taken place had we not surrendered to Jesus, I shudder. There is fierce love in our home. What you see is what you get with us. People joke and kid with me all the time about the way we love each other.

"You and John are so sappy and mushy!"

Yep. We sure are.

I would always think to myself — if you only knew what we have gone through to get here. We hold on to each other and we hold on tight.

We live. We laugh. We love.

John and I have learned the gift of God in marriage. We are a team. We love and we love hard. We don't hide it. Love is a decision and we have decided to love on purpose.

When I am weak, he is strong. When he is weak, I am strong.

We are John and Shannon. And we always will be. 

(To read Shannon's story in full, visit her website).

When Giving Up is a Good Thing



By Wendy Munsell

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My story of childhood sexual abuse began at the age of nine and ended over three years later when I was twelve. The perpetrator, my father, abused his role of protector and taught me, without having to say a word, to fear and stay silent about anything I didn't understand.

As a result, until recently, anxiety has been a constant factor in my life.

I also learned that my feelings, desires, and instincts didn't matter; after all, bad things happened to me regardless of what I wanted or did to avoid them. The disconnect between reality and my conscious thoughts about the abuse became somewhat skewed.

Defense mechanisms are a God-given way for us to protect ourselves from the consequences of trauma in a sin-shattered world. However, if relied on for too long, at a young age, those techniques can become a problem in and of themselves.

In my case, I became confused about the original purpose of my preferred method of protection – hiding, until I lost myself.

On one hand, I dealt with the situation by not thinking about it as much as possible. When that wasn't possible, I tried, with varying degrees of success, to pretend that I wasn't there. Kind of like the ostrich with her head in the sand, I tried to disappear, even if only mentally.

As a naturally compliant child and people-pleaser, I couldn't admit to anyone, myself included, that anything was wrong because that was... unthinkable.

How could I possibly begin to admit that this situation I couldn't control existed, to myself, let alone anyone else? That included God; I never even asked Jesus to make what I couldn't think about... go away.

But go away it did.

“The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me,
because the Lord has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim freedom for the captives
and release from darkness for the prisoners,
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor
and the day of vengeance of our God,
to comfort all who mourn,
and provide for those who grieve in Zion—
to bestow on them a crown of beauty
instead of ashes,
the oil of joy
instead of mourning,
and a garment of praise
instead of a spirit of despair.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
a planting of the Lord
for the display of his splendor.” (Isaiah 61: 1-3)


One day I finally spoke up.

I distinctly remember the moment I found the courage to come out of hiding. God used an image on a television program about incest to unlock the part of my heart and mind that had been keeping me voiceless.

The ongoing reoccurrence of the actual events ended, and while that was certainly a relief, the mental and emotional effects lingered and deepened. I now know that deep-seated feelings of not being “worth it” or “enough” were most likely the reason I hadn’t, or couldn’t, reach out for help.

So when the abuse I had spent over three years pretending wasn’t happening suddenly and silently ended, life seemed to go on as though nothing had occurred. But it had... and deep inside me the person who had been sleeping began to wake up to the fact that she had been wronged.

It was a painful but essential process. I needed to acknowledge that I had been sinned against so I could go to my Heavenly Father to receive the wonderful gifts that He had waiting for me – gifts of healing that led to wholeness and learning to trust again.

I feel compelled to reach out to others who may feel lost and hopeless in their own pain. It is my hope and prayer that the recounting of my story will help point other hurting hearts to the only real source of healing... Jesus Christ. 

(Visit the site to read more of Wendy’s story).

Why God Allows Pain and Suffering



By Horace Williams Jr.

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In the summer of 2010, I was so confused every night as I lay in the hospital bed having suffered a massive stroke. “Why does God allow pain and suffering?”

I asked myself as I laid with my entire left side paralyzed, feeling terrified, worried, and upset.

While going through the shock and denial of it all, I finally began to understand that there was a reason God allowed the stroke to occur. I know it sounds crazy but the stroke was the best thing that happened in my life!

I want to share with you five specific reasons God allows pain and suffering in our lives—all of which I’ve experienced.

Humility and Brokenness

God sometimes uses pain and suffering to humble us and to break our self reliance. To remind us of how dependent we are on Him. Every breath we take, our abilities and talents, everything we have is because God blesses us. I definitely needed to be reminded of that prior to my stroke.

I had become so consumed with my success at work and the financial rewards it provided, my job had become my idol! God is the one that gave me the abilities to perform at that level and I needed to be reminded and show gratitude towards Him instead of always patting myself on the back.

Honor and Glorify God

Sometimes we go through the suffering so that God is glorified and honored. At times people have shared with me what an inspiration or encouragement I am as I strive to recover from my stroke, but my response is "only by the grace of God."

He is the one healing my body, allowing me to speak clearly, walk again and now be able to eat and drink without drooling on myself. I am glad that my recovery allows...

others to see God's power working in my life!

Helping to Comfort Others

Another reason we go through suffering is so we can be a comfort to others when they are suffering themselves. In **2 Corinthians 1:3-5** it says:

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, 4 who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. 5 For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ so also our comfort abounds through Christ."

God wants to use us to comfort others when they need it based on the suffering we have experienced and He brought us through. For example, instead of saying, "I'm sorry," how much better is it to tell them you have been through something similar and God delivered you.

Have An Intimate Relationship with God

I have been hearing about God since I was born. I was raised in a Christian home and taken to church every...

Sunday, but I did not have an intimate relationship with Him. I usually had to search for my bible on those Sundays. So how do you become intimate with God? By spending time with Him, reading and studying His word, and praying constantly. It's like any relationship. The more time you spend together, the more you focus on that person and seek to understand them, and the relationship grows stronger.

That is God's ultimate desire.

"Seek ye first His kingdom and His righteousness and all these things will be added to you." (Matthew 6:33)

Help Increase our Faith

As we go through suffering, we seek out God and when He brings us through, our faith grows even stronger.


"Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing." (James 1:2-4)

Joy during suffering? Are you serious? We may not be...

jumping for joy during our suffering, but we have joy in the sense that God is using this trial to test, strengthen, and even validate our faith. If we respond in the Godly way during our suffering, our faith is increased and we have joy knowing that God is in control.

Looking back on my stroke, if God can bring me through that He can bring me through anything! In **John 16:33**, Jesus says...

“These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you will have peace. In the world you will have tribulation but take courage; I have overcome the world.”

I pray you remember these five things the next time you encounter suffering or your faith is being tested. Know that God is the “Potter” and we are the clay. He uses the pain and suffering to continue molding us into the person that He created us for. 

What Birds Can Teach Us



By Karen Del Tatto

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Ever since I was a very small child, I loved watching birds. I would wake up with them! I remember sitting at the front window very early in the morning watching the robins as they hopped around the blades of grass glistening with dew.

The robins would tilt their heads to listen for worms and suddenly snatch one up! But this little girl's fascination didn't stop there...

On warm summer evenings, after a fresh bath, I would put on crisp pajamas and crawl into bed for an early bedtime of 7:30 p.m. As the sun would set, I loved falling asleep to the sound of the Robin's beautiful night song which would fill the air with such comforting sounds.

I still love listening to the different bird songs that fill my backyard.

In the middle of the night, warm summer breezes blow through open windows, carrying with it the sound of a lone bird calling in the distance, and such peace washes over me. As the sun begins to rise, the bird's song seems to be the most exuberant and cheerful.

I sat and pondered this.

Do I face each new day with singing and rejoicing, or do I complain and dread the day? Or, as I lay my head to sleep, do I rejoice in the day that the Lord had given me, praising Him for His many blessings, or am I weary from burdens, grumbling myself to sleep...

I confess that too often, when I become fully awake and aware, all my troubles seem to come flying back into my head after being tucked away while I slept. And at bedtime, I can find myself presupposing what the next day will be like... borrowing trouble.

"The attitude of my heart should instead sing aloud of His steadfast love in the morning." (Psalm 59:16)

My heart should never be lacking in praise to my God and Father. No matter what my circumstances are, there are always reasons to praise Him: most especially for His unfailing love for me! Starting my morning with praise on my lips to the Lord will set the tone for the rest of the day.

My mornings should begin with prayer and time in the Word.

“Let me hear in the morning of your steadfast love, for in you I trust. Make me to know the way I should go for to you I lift up my soul.” (Psalm 143:8)

Every verse in God's word speaks of His steadfast love for me. To begin my day remembering I am wholly loved by Almighty God brings confidence to the day, a day I don't have to face alone, but with God, my ever-present Help. Through prayer and the Word, I can seek God's will for my day, and He will direct my steps in the way I should go.

In the morning, I must commit my day to the Lord to be a pleasing sacrifice as I seek to obey and walk with Him.

“In the morning you hear my voice; in the morning I prepare a sacrifice for you and watch.” (Psalm 5:3)

Whenever I have committed my day to the Lord, including Him in my thoughts and decisions, I am always amazed how much better the day goes. I am more tranquil and content. The sacrifice of committing my day to the Lord is truly something that I can watch unfold throughout the day as I see His blessings surround me.

When I've started out my day in praise, prayer and Scripture reading, the blessings of the day will naturally out-flow into evening.

"In peace I will both lie down and sleep, for you alone, O Lord make me to dwell in safety." (Psalm 4:8)

Being Painted By God



By Kelly R. Baker

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A look at God's marvelous creation reveals that He is a painter. Glorious sunrises. Majestic mountains. Vast seas. Matchless artistry.

He's still painting. God is painting you.

You are the canvas, white, and fresh, ready now to become into what only the Painter can truly see in His mind's eye. No one has a more accurate picture of you than He does. He sees you as a certain finished product that will be completed at some point in the future.

The canvas doesn't get to choose the colors. The painter will chose a color and begin painting, and then a different color and paint some more. At that...

point, an onlooker will turn up his nose with one glance.

It's undesirable.

But to the painter, it's necessary to work toward the vision He has of the finished piece of work. God erases our sins, but not the color of our experiences and memories.

Blue. It's losing a loved one, and leaning into the arms of the Comforter.

Yellow. It's learning to worship with a pure heart to a Holy God.

Orange. It's crucifying the passions and lusts.

Green. It's finding the habit of seeking His green pastures.

Red. It's choosing to love.


Numerous shades come from His purposes. After awhile, the onlooker can see where the painter is going with His design, and then his attitude turns to eager expectation.

"And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally..."

finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.”

(Philippians 1:6 NLT)

That work that He's started in you? He's working toward the vision He has of you. What you're going through? He's using it for good. He's using those vibrant “colors” to make you into a mouth-dropping awesome masterpiece.

God is the Master Artist of your life, and He is painting you into awesome. 

Nourish Your Soul Each Time You Read the Bible



By Erika DeWitt

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I believe that one of the hardest parts of being a Christian is being in your Bible every day and loving (or even just liking) it. We feel this way not because we don't want to do what's right for us or what honors God, but it's just that most of the time, we feel one of three things: overwhelmed, clueless, or bored.

Experiencing these feelings enough times can turn our Bible time into a chore, when really, our souls should be receiving nourishment!

Though there are many articles online that offer help with individual bible study, I never found one that was quite the "key" to soul food. Daily reading plans and application questions are a good start to getting familiar with the Bible and how it is still relevant to...

us today, but once we pass that beginning stage, when we are seasoned Christians and have seen God do some amazing things before our eyes--we begin wanting something more.

Let me tell you that for a while now, there has been a shift in my expectation when I'm in the Word. No longer do I want to feel like I'm studying to pass a test, but that I'm really open to hearing God speak to me each time, and that I can glean whatever I truly need.

Sounds lofty, doesn't it?

But this is the soul nourishment I've been talking about, and instead of feeling overwhelmed, clueless, or bored, I want to love what I'm reading and get the most out of it, as God intends.

So...

The good news is, after a long season of discovering how this could be done, I finally figured it out. Oddly enough, that answer was always in front of me, but my thinking was wrong. Chances are, your thinking may be too.

Consider: What scripture is ministering to you the most?

Whichever one it is, spend your Bible time focusing on it EACH DAY until God brings you a new one. He knows us far better than we know ourselves, and dedicating as much time as we need to a particular verse can be so rewarding and make our Bible time make sense.

Where my thinking used to be wrong is that I thought I needed to read something new in the Bible every day. Not true! And looking back, this thinking was why I'd experience some days of being spoken to and many more of going unnourished.

Has your brain been stuck in the "something new" pattern? Because my Bible time has literally been revolutionized by escaping it! And by focusing on particular verses that minister to me for the necessary amount of time, I have been lead to some of my life verses.

These verses are the ones that minister to us no matter what situation we are in in life.

One of mine is:

"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." (Isaiah 60:1 KJV)

That verse is not only extremely beautiful, but just floods...

my soul with hope and purpose. YOUR life verse should do exactly the same. Maybe you've found it, or maybe you haven't yet. That's ok!

But if you've been feeling overwhelmed, bored or clueless about your Bible time lately, simply focusing each day on what does minister to you will lead you to it.

Blessings and continued nourishment to you. 

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Thank you for reading!

