

**Sunday, June 30th**

## **"Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus"**

by Dona Hake **Psalm 119:165 Amplified Bible (AMP)**

**"Great peace have they who love Your law; nothing shall offend them or make them stumble."** When we are so in love with the Lord and His Word we simply seem to be preoccupied with thoughts of Him and this is the way He wants it to be.

**Psalm 1:2 (AMP) "But his delight and desire are in the law of the Lord, and on His law (the precepts, the instructions, the teachings of God) he habitually meditates (ponders and studies) by day and by night."** The scripture in Psalms that I began with stated that as we love His law we will have great peace, not a little peace, but great peace. As a result of great peace no matter what happens **NOTHING** will offend us nor will we stumble.

The devil knows well that if he can make us stumble and trip us up that God can not work effectively through us. He well knows that these types of things can cause a "stand still" in our spiritual walk and keep us from shining for Him. Offense can be very hurtful and it can cause you to be preoccupied with the whole ordeal. Again, if the devil can keep you preoccupied with someone else's sin toward you, you will fall into offense. The more we are saturated with God's Word and staying in fellowship with Him the less unkindnesses toward us will affect us.

As I was meditating on this scripture my heart began to hear the chorus to "Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus" written by **Helen H. Lemmel in 1922**.

**"Turn your eyes upon Jesus, Look full in His wonderful face, And the things of earth will grow strangely dim, In the light of His glory and grace..."**

I think this is just so powerful and my favorite part of this chorus is "and the things of earth will grow strangely dim..." The word that really sticks out to me is **strangely**. The Word of God says in Philippians 4:6-7 (KJV)

**"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."**

Another way you can look at the peace that passes all understanding is that as we look to Him in the light of His glory and grace, the things that once seemed to matter **strangely** just do not seem to hold the weight they once did. You know deep down God's love rises above such things. You just know that you serve such a big God that is well able to take the situation and work it out on your behalf and you will rise above it.

I encourage you today to look into His face, look into His Word, listen to Him when He speaks to you. Know that no matter what you are facing whether it be an offense or hurt that there is nothing that can cause you to stumble as you remain fixed on the Lord Jesus Christ. I pray your day will be wonderful as you serve Him.

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**Saturday, June 29th**

**"The Power of Endurance"**

by Dona Hake

Today we are going to look at the word **endurance**. What a powerful word and the Lord desires we walk in it. It is the ability or strength to continue on and last especially despite fatigue, stress, or other adverse conditions. In the midst of a trying situation if you make a decision to endure, **you will see the victory**

I am going to point out two short but dangerous sentences that cannot be allowed in our vocabulary. **"I give up!"** and **"I quit!"** Once again I will call to your remembrance about being single-minded. These words evolve from incorrect thoughts that we allow to remain in our minds. Once you step out in anything you must be resolute that no matter what happens, you will not quit. Even if we do not win or things do not work out the way we thought they would, we must have the attitude that we will get right back up and try again. We can not be ruled by what we see in this life.

In the following scripture Paul was reminding them to remember when they had struggles yet they continued strong. Lets read this... **Hebrews 10:32-35 (Easy**

*to Read) translation*

**"Remember the days when you first learned the truth. You had a hard struggle with much suffering, but you continued strong. 33 Sometimes people said hateful things to you and mistreated you in public. And sometimes you helped others who were being treated that same way. Yes, you helped them in prison and shared in their suffering. And you were still happy when everything you owned was taken away from you. You continued to be happy, because you knew that you had something much better—something that would continue forever. So don't lose the courage that you had in the past. Your courage will be rewarded richly."**

Many times people get hung up in not wanting to talk about the past but yet as a Christian we should be ready to share any struggles in our past where we experienced the victory because we endured in our faith. **This is the power of testimony!** There are times as well that we need to call ourselves to the remembrance of the victory we had. You see when you are walking through a trying time and you may be feeling stressed and emotionally worn down, it would be good for you to call to your memory the victories in which you stood strong. When we recall such testimonies it will renew our minds and refresh our spirits that God can once again perform His Word in your life.

In Hebrews 12:1-3 it says to look away from ALL that would distract you and look to Jesus. It reminds us to think about Him and how He endured opposition and bitter hostility. We must consider what we are walking through against what He endured and not be weary and exhausted in our minds and lose heart in the battle.

**Corrie TenBoom said this:**

**"If God sends us on strong paths, we are provided strong shoes."**

Know that God has given us all that we need to endure and cross the finish line in victory through Him. I pray this has encouraged your heart as you purpose to serve Him this day! God bless you!

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Friday, June 28th

**"The Power of Words"**

by Dona Hake We have been looking over the past few days at how we must be single-minded. If you have been following this devotional you probably have this definition memorized by now but I am going to share it again. To be double-minded is when vacillates in opinion or purpose, wavers, is indecisive, hesitates, and is not resolute.

A person that is single-minded in the Word of God will stand firm in their purpose in this life, they will not be moved by anything, they will be decisive in matters, there will be no hesitancy or concern over their decision making and they will be resolute. I would like to say at this point that God sees being single-minded as being normal. If He asks us to obey and do certain things that seem out of the normal it is because we are looking at our own ability to bring them to pass. When we come to the place in our walk with the Lord that we are loyal to Him and Him alone we will experience stability in every area. It may not happen overnight but God is faithful to complete and makes us able to do all that He sees as His perfect will for us.

Today we are going to look at one of the most common problems of the individual that will not purpose themselves to be single-minded. Did you ever hear someone say, "I stuck my foot in my mouth again!" or "Every time I open my mouth it gets me in trouble." I am sure we have all heard or said these. I absolutely hate when I speak things before I have not given thought to my words. Words have such power because they are vessels that can carry so much to the hearer. A word can make someone happy or sad. A word could cause someone to go forward or stand still and experience the greatest of discouragement.

In the book of James chapter three he wrote about how humanity is capable of taming every bird and beast in existence, but no man has ever demonstrated the ability to tame his own tongue. He wrote that it is a spring of restless evil, brimming with toxic poisons. Our mouths can say one thing in one moment of time and in the next moment say the total opposite. As he proceeds into the chapter he wrote and ask the question "how does a spring gush crystal clear fresh water and moments later spurt out bitter salt water?"

I believe there will be times that we say things that are very wrong and it was because you were tired, weary, upset or not feeling well. Many times it is an indication that you have not been focusing on God as you know you know you should and your words can exhibit that. There will be times that we mess up with our words but it is what we do immediately after we mess up that counts. If one speaks continually wrong with their mouth and feels no remorse about what they said, they will soon fall into the category of which James was writing about. They will say things like "I'm going to speak my mind and I do not care what anyone thinks!!" This is trouble going somewhere to happen for sure. Yet I am sure we have all experienced times where we have spoken things in the passion of the moment and we immediately regret what we have said. I can absolutely say that there have been times that I have expressed my heart while being upset and my heart was pricked so badly and I was so upset with myself. I would

immediately ask God to forgive me. It is vitally important that we also ask any individuals for their forgiveness if they were in your presence at the time or your words were directed at them.

When we are really right with God the words that come out of our mouths will be closely monitored by our hearts. James 3:10-12 (Easy To Read Version) "These praises and curses come from the same mouth. My brothers and sisters, this should not happen. Do good water and bad water flow from the same spring? Of course not. My brothers and sisters, can a fig tree make olives? Or can a grapevine make figs? No, and a well full of salty water cannot give good water."

Let us be full of the truth of God's Word that when we open our mouths and speak our words will be full of that which is desirable to Him. Our words will be consistent with truth and steadfastly adhering to His principles and His Will for our life. I pray that these words will bless your heart this day and I encourage you to keep your mind renewed to the Word of God and speak blessing to all those around you!

**Thursday, June 27th**

### **"Doubt and Faith-They Both Have Voices"**

by Dona Hake Yesterday I shared with you about how important it is to be single minded. We learned that to be double minded is to be vacillating in opinion or purpose. It is to be wavering, indecisive, hesitating and not resolute. We looked at James 1:6-8 and saw that we need to know that our faith is in God alone. We cannot afford to waver for if we do we will be like a wave of the sea that is blown and tossed by the wind. When we do this we cannot expect to receive anything from the Lord. When we are not resolute we will be unstable in everything that we do.

Today we are going to look at James 1:6-8 from the Voice Translation. I was so taken with this translation because the wording really makes you think even closer at the dangers of being double minded and the consequences it can bring.

## James 1:6-8 (The Voice)

***"The key is that your request be anchored by your single-minded commitment to God. Those who depend only on their own judgment are like those lost on the seas, carried away by any wave or picked up by any wind. Those adrift on their own wisdom shouldn't assume the Lord will rescue them or bring them anything. The splinter of divided loyalty shatters your compass and leaves you dizzy and confused."***

When we are single minded toward God we will react in faith in any given situation. If we are **not** single-minded it is because we are more than likely depending on our own wisdom in different areas. When one fails to totally submit themselves to the Word of God they will always be tempted to rely on their knowledge or experience. God sees us to be in a dangerous place when we are not living by faith in Him. It is sad that if one will not give their all to God and then assume that all should work out in the end just because they think it should.

I really love how this translation brings an even greater insight in the very last sentence of this portion of scripture in James 1:8...

***"The splinter of divided loyalty shatters your compass and leaves you dizzy and confused."***

The danger of not be single minded can cause severe consequences. Just as a compass keeps you on track, being single-minded with all that God has for you will also keep you wise, discerning and very sensitive to the voice of the Lord in the midst of trouble. Your spiritual "compass" will keep you right on target and you will remain strong, steady, and focused in the midst of a storm. This "compass" is vital because if you are in a problem, the last thing you need is to feel spiritually dizzy, confused, and not knowing which direction to turn.

When we are weak spiritually and our emotions are a wreck from the trial you are walking through you may find yourself more susceptible to confusion and wrong thinking. Much of the time this is where the voice of doubt originates from. When we are not established in truth before the storm comes we will be in trouble when we are in the midst of a trial. I am going to leave you with a poem that I absolutely love because of it's powerful message.

***Doubt sees the obstacle, faith sees the way; Doubt sees the darkest night, faith sees the day; Doubt dreads to take a step, faith soars on high; Doubt questions, "Who believes?" FAITH answers "I" (Anonymous)***

Keep your spiritual ears tuned to the Spirit of God and keep your faith strong in Him. Give no place to the voice of doubt. Allow it now room in your thoughts. I pray that this devotional has been a blessing to you today!

**Wednesday, June 26th**

**"Purpose To Be Single Minded"**

by Dona Hake

Over the many years that I have heard my husband preach there is one thing that I have heard him say many times over..."If you purpose to that which is right, you will not do the wrong." This is so very true! Many times we look at what we struggle with and this can make our battle look hopeless. If we seek the Lord in what the right thing is to do rather than try to figure it out on our own, we will be victorious.

Today I want to share about the struggle of being double minded. Many times when I see words such as this I immediately have a picture in my mind and maybe you do the same as well. For me it is like I see my brain but within it there are two "rooms" and the one should be boarded shut. That "room" is the place of doubt and unbelief. I am hoping this analogy will help you grasp better what I share today.

Many times we are in a place where we dare not allow doubt to rule in our minds yet circumstances are screaming and the battle begins. Doubt starts to speak and you listen. Confusion and frustration begins to enter in even as you pray. Many times I have seen people proclaiming they have prayed yet they make statements such as "Where is God in all of this mess?" Please, never say such a thing. This thought is evil if you are a believer and you are basically saying that God picks and chooses when He is walking beside you. His Word says that He would never forsake us therefore HE NEVER LEAVES US! In preparation for this

devotional I looked up what double minded meant and I find it to be short **but not sweet. It is not a good thing** and we must recognize it when we are being tempted to entertain it's voice in our walk with the Lord.

**To be double minded is to be vacillating in opinion or purpose. Not resolute, wavering, indecisive, and hesitating.**

When we step out into anything we must be single minded and uncompromising. Many a prayer is not answered and it is not because God does not want to see you blessed. The unanswered prayer can be for many a reason but we must look at why single mindedness is so vital in our walk with the Lord.

***James 1:6-8 New Living Translation "But when you ask him, be sure that your faith is in God alone. Do not waver, for a person with divided loyalty is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is blown and tossed by the wind. Such people should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. Their loyalty is divided between God and the world, and they are unstable in everything they do."*** God desires we be loyal to Him and His Word no matter what is going on around us. This scripture gives the visual of us being tossed around like the wave of the sea. When I read this I think of being confused, weary, and not knowing what is going to happen next. This truly is not the state in which a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ should be abiding.

I plan to share more on this tomorrow but I encourage you to meditate upon being single minded and purposed in your thoughts. I believe everyone has struggles with this at one time or another but be encouraged that the Lord is well able to strengthen you by His Word. He never asks us to do anything that He does not provide a way. Be blessed as you walk with Him. Have a wonderful day!

**Tuesday, June 25th**

**"Courage To Rise Above Your Fears"**

by Dona Hake

Yesterday I shared how there is no thing too difficult for God. If you are a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ you can know that because He lives within you that there is not one thing you have to face that He is not able to take you through. I am also thinking about the word courage. Courage is the quality of mind or spirit that enables a person to face difficulty, danger, pain, etc., without fear; bravery. I want to share with you Joshua 1:9 (NIV) "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid: do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you where ever you go." I am sure God spoke to Joshua in this manner knowing that he was realizing all that was before him to accomplish the will of God.

As I was preparing for this devotional I began thinking about what courage meant to me and if there were any examples. One that I decided to use was the police, firefighters and citizens who rushed into buildings to save lives on September 11, 2001. Tragedies such as this have a way of being seared into our memory. I remember exactly where I was standing when I heard the news that day. I can remember watching TV and seeing the whole thing unfold. I can remember many times my emotions would overtake me as I would hear of people risking their lives to save someone and how that touched my heart. I especially marveled at the courage it must have taken those passengers on Flight 93 to take that plane down knowing their lives would be over but yet they had a cause and that cause gave them courage.

I am sure people that are trained such as a firefighter or policeman may wonder each day what they may have to face. I can guarantee you that not a one of those firefighters or policemen ever thought they would ever have to face such a dark day as September 11th. When one has committed themselves to an area of service such as this they are well aware of the dangers. I am sure there are countless untold stories of Christians that were firefighters or policemen that courageously went into those buildings that day. I would have to say that their passion and love for what they do drives them to rise above their fears if need be.

We as believers are all called differently and our fears can come in different ways. No matter how big or small a fear is, it takes courage to deal with it. What may make one fearful the other it would not bother. It is neither here nor there what classifies a fear but rather that you are calling upon the Lord to rise above it. I think one of the fears that can really hit people is the fear of failure. This fear can hold one back from doing God's perfect will. Courage is vital for us to go forth and rise above anything we think that we cannot do.

I would like to share with you how my youngest son had dealt with a particular fear, he determined himself to rise above it and he overcame it. Knowing he had a fear of heights he decided to take a drastic measure to deal with it ...so he decided he was going to jump out of an airplane and skydive. May I confess to you that I had to ask God for courage to handle the thought of it all. I must admit that it was quite amazing especially since he had the whole thing video taped. When you watched this, you felt like you were there.

An interesting thing about his experience is when they got to the altitude where they were ready to jump, if they wanted to go even higher it was a bit more expensive and our son decided to go to an even higher altitude before he jumped. They went an additional 5,000 feet! A lesson to learn from this is you never know what you are capable of overcoming when you make a decision to look your fear square in the face! To this day I still cannot believe he did it yet I rejoiced in knowing that he was willing to go to such an extreme measure and face a fear.

Sometimes we have to go to drastic measures to rise above our fears. We have to put our flesh in a place where it is screaming for a way out, and you are not going to give in. As you face your fear with the courage of the Lord you will be amazed at what you are able to overcome.

Not all fears are big but they are big enough to hold you back and torment you yet you need determination to deal with them as well. Sometimes courage is just a quiet determination that you are going to keep on keeping on until you rise above and conquer whatever you are trying to do. I will leave you with this quote that I found fitting.

"Courage doesn't always roar. Sometimes courage is the quiet voice at the end of the day saying, "I will try again tomorrow." Mary Anne Radmacher

Know that you can go forward in anything you put your heart and mind too with the courage, strength and wisdom of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Monday, June 24th**

## **"Nothing Is Too Difficult For Him"**

by Dona Hake Today I want to share with you about your perspective of God as you live your life. How do you see Him? How alive is He in your daily routine? Is He in your daily routines? I love to think of Him as my loving Father that is watching over me carefully and He also desires that I have my eye on Him. Sometimes we just need to step back and remind ourselves that no matter what we face in this life, God is greater and His power within is more than enough to carry us through the demands of our day or any difficulties.

**Jeremiah 32:17 (VOICE) "Eternal Lord, with Your outstretched arm and Your enormous power You created the heavens and the earth. Nothing is too difficult for You."**

It is important that we recognize that we live in a day where our wonderful Living God is being discredited. People are trying to convince us that God does not exist, and they are trying to explain away the wondrous things He created with His hands. Much of people trying to discredit God is because they do not want to live their lives accountable to anyone let alone God. If they can convince themselves that God does not exist, they can live by their own standards and decide what is right and wrong for themselves.

We must not permit these evil mindsets to discourage our hearts because He is ready to do wonderful things through us like never before! We live in a time where God is ready to move us forward into a great harvest and we cannot be moved by what seems to look impossible. Sometimes I think it is actually better when it seems impossible to accomplish something He commands because it forces us to totally depend upon Him and not rely on our own ability. If the devil can render you ineffective by keeping you preoccupied with your own inabilities or personal problems, you will find it hard to be used by Him to reach people.

We have all encountered difficult situations, difficult people, difficult decisions, etc..., let us be mindful that nothing is too difficult for Him. I encourage you to take whatever concerns you to Him. His Words says in Psalm 138:8 (KJV)

**"The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me,,,"**

Let us trust Him with our day and our lives. Remind yourself that there is NOTHING too hard for Him and He is well able to perfect ANYTHING in your life that is concerning to you. Look to the God of all creation, the one who spoke words that created everything around knowing that nothing is too difficult for Him as you place your life in His hands!

**Sunday, June 23rd**

**"Understand the Process and Don't Be Weary"**

by Dona Hake

Whatever we put our hand to in this life we must keep in mind that there is a process. First of all we must be able to say that our plans have God's approval upon them before we step out and walk toward seeing them accomplished. Many times people fail and their heart is discouraged and it is all because it was their own plans and God never approved of them to begin with. You can be certain that if what you are doing is His will that His hand will be upon it. Along with that thought we must always remember that God's timing can be very different from ours therefore we must be patient. Proverbs 16:9 (NASB) " The mind of man plans his way, But the Lord directs his steps."

God is so wise in all that He does and His understanding is beyond whatever we can understand. There are so many ways He teaches us His process and I would like to share that there is the time of planting, waiting, tending and at the right time, there is the beauty of the end result.

Recently I went to pick up my granddaughters for the day and it was pouring down raining. I think all of us can be tempted to do a little grumbling inside if the rain comes down on a day that you the rain ruined your plans. When my oldest granddaughter Marissa got into my car she was so cute how she began to share how she was upset that it was raining. I let her go on for a little and I stopped her and began to say, "Oh Rissa, rain is a good thing!" (at that point she gave me one of those..."what's wrong with Grandma" looks. ) "Rissa, we have to have rain, it gives us water to drink and it makes things grow that the farmer is planting." Her whole attitude changed and she kept asking me questions as we were driving about corn growing and how it needed sunshine and rain be grow up, be tall, and bear corn to eat. I felt to take her to a nearby corn field that was just recently plowed and I was showing her how there would be corn there someday. All her little eyes could see was dirt plowed in perfect rows and that was it. Every week now she asks to go see the corn growing and her little eyes sparkle as she is seeing it begin to grow.

At four years of age I know Marissa does not understand anything technical about the planting and growth process of an ear of corn. She just simply believes and in her child like faith and expectancy is evidence that she intends to see corn on those stalks some day! Oh that we would maintain a child like faith as we step out in something and just believe that we do not have to understand all the details of the process. So many times in this life we begin by putting our hand to something. We know it is God's will but we decide on how the process is to take place. When we lean on our own understanding we will ultimately invite discouragement and weariness into that which was meant to be a success and joy. If you are doing that which is right and good and you are following the direction of the Lord, you can be assured that you will reap in due season. Galatians 6:9 (AMP) "And let us not lose heart and grow weary and faint in acting nobly and doing right, for in due time and at the appointed season we shall reap, if we do not loosen and relax our courage and faint."

I encourage you today to look to Him for every bit of direction you need in your life. Be attentive to His words and be obedient to that which He speaks. Many times God's direction can be so radical from what you are comfortable with. He understands the process better than you and all He needs from you is your willing heart and a diligent pursuit in the process. Remember you will reap in the appointed season if you do not lose heart or relax in your courage.

Have a wonderful day today!

**Saturday, June 22nd**

**"Walk in the light, for such a time as this"**

by Dona Hake Yesterday I shared with you that one of the first things our God did in creation was to not only create but to separate. He separated the light from the dark. As we live our lives as victorious believers we too must keep our hearts, soul, and mind separate from the ways of darkness. I think sometimes when people read such a statement that I just shared your first inclination is to think of not doing bad things. We do not just up and do bad things, it begins with small thoughts that evolve into walking a wrong path, making a decision contrary to the truth, or not holding fast to His Word in your life.

We are living in a time where spiritual darkness is on the increase. My heart is extremely grieved to see when believers refuse to acknowledge this. It is not that they do not see it but they go about their business just trying to stay happy, keep busy and maintain a comfort zone. As we continue to walk in His Word I believe that in the midst of this deep darkness that is covering our earth with deception that something very wonderful is going to transpire in Spirit like never before. In order for God to sweep this earth and bring many to Him, we MUST remain strong, upright and diligent to walk in His truth. Psalm 112:4 The Voice (VOICE) "When life is dark, a light will shine for those who live rightly— those who are merciful, compassionate, and strive for justice."

I believe many weaken in their faith and do not persist in their faith solely because they are afraid of the condition of the world. We as believers need to be aware of what is going on in the world so that we can be diligent to pray. As we persist in His Word and proclaim it as we live uprightly HE HAS PROMISED that light will shine for us in the midst of darkness. We cannot stick our heads in the sand and pretend it is not happening. I do not sit and watch the news 24/7 but I find it important to find a good news source and follow to the degree of being aware. Let our hearts be strengthened in knowing that...

**We do not have  
to be  
afraid  
for such a time as this we are here.**

Jesus addressed fear in the book of Matthew and we need to refer to this scripture today in light of what I am sharing: Matthew 24:5-7 Amplified Bible (AMP) "For many will come in (on the strength of) My name appropriating the name which belongs to Me, saying, I am the Christ (the Messiah), and they will lead many astray. And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars; see that you are not frightened or troubled, for this must take place, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in place after place;"

As I referred to yesterday's devotional mentioning one of the first things God did was separate light from dark. Let's look at the word \*separate\* again in the scriptures because in this scripture there is something we will NEVER be separated from... Romans 8:39 "Nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to SEPARATE us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Continue to shine for Jesus and hold fast to His promises. God is calling us in such a time as this to be beacons of light to a world that is looking for answers to their fears and they need the hope we can bring to them.

**Friday June 21st**

**"...and Then There Was Light."**

by Dona Hake

**Genesis 1:1-5 (The Voice)**

**" In the beginning, God created everything: the heavens above and the earth below. Here's what happened: At first the earth lacked shape and was totally empty, and a dark fog draped over the deep while God's spirit-wind hovered over the surface of the empty waters. Then there was the voice of God. God: Let there be light. And light flashed into being. God saw that the light was beautiful and good, and He separated the light from the darkness. God named the light "day" and the darkness "night." Evening gave way to morning. That was day one.**

As we read this portion of scripture we see the mighty hand of God in the beginning as His He did everything in order and with purpose. I went to bed in the wee hours of the morning meditating on light and light shining in the darkness. I felt to go back to this scripture and went to bed thinking about how God first of all created but the very first thing He separated was light from darkness. In light of that I think of who we are and what He desires that we represent in this world. We must remind ourselves that as believers we are called to bring light into a world of darkness. We are called to **separate ourselves** from anything associated with darkness. We should not be blending, we should be shining the brilliant light of the life of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**2 Corinthians 4:6**

"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." I cannot help but think back to the evening that I received the Lord into my life. I was so stubborn and was determined not to say the sinner's prayer that my friends begged me to pray. I had a handful of believing Christian friends that were determined to see me in the Kingdom of God and I was one argumentative stubborn young lady! My friend convinced me to attend a week long revival and every evening as the call to salvation was made I sat there stubbornly and refused to give in although the Light was tugging at my heart. The very last evening during the call my good friend was on her knees at the alter praying and I knew she was praying for me. The evangelist shared before he left the stage, "It was good being with all of you this week, and if I do not see you again here I will see you in Heaven someday." As I sat there I can remember being struck by this man's belief that there was a Heaven and there was a Hell. It was his words of belief in His God that brought the final convincing words of light to my dark soul.

I encourage you today to not underestimate your witness, your words and your life before those around you. They may seem unmovable as they cling to their stubborn ways, but they may be an arm's length away from making a decision. I can remember getting up out of my seat and kneeling beside my friend who had been diligently praying for me. I asked the Lord Jesus into my heart and I reached over and whispered in her ear "I made the decision." We wept together and to this day I can remember that tangible feeling of the weight of sin falling off of me as the light and life of the Lord Jesus Christ invaded my empty and dark heart.

Today I encourage you to be a light to everyone around you, and do not give up on praying for the ones that seem hopeless. I will be continuing to share on light and what it should mean to us over the next few days. Praying your day will be blessed.

**Thursday, June 20th**

**"Guided In Humility"**

by Dona Hake

Yesterday I shared the importance of walking in integrity. Proverbs 11:3 in the Easy to Read Version says, "Good people are guided by their honesty." Above any people on this earth I believe that the believer of the Lord Jesus Christ needs to exhibit integrity. There is so much crookedness in this world that people are afraid to trust anyone anymore. How sad it is if a believer decides to walk in this path. Our hearts and souls should be tugged at the mere thought of not doing what the Word of God says. Yet, there are those that feel they can pick and choose the way in which they walk and try to convince themselves that God is walking with them.

Many times people like this think that just because all is well that God's hand of blessing is on it but the time will come when truth will come to show up. I remember Roberts Liardon saying, "Truth ALWAYS outlives a lie." God wants our hearts to be pure, right and of utmost integrity. His hand will never bless that which is of an impure motive or thought.

Proverbs 25:9 (The Voice)

"With justice, He directs the humble in ALL that is right and He shows them His way." We can stand in knowing that He will direct us to walk in the right path

and He will be faithful to cause us to walk in that path.

1 Peter 5:5 (Amplified)

"For God sets Himself against the proud (the insolent, the overbearing, the disdainful, the presumptuous, the boastful)—[and He opposes, frustrates, and defeats them], but gives grace (favor, blessing) to the humble."

It is plainly put here in this scripture that God does not lead those that choose a life of pride. The good news is that if one is in this sad place that if he humble himself He will always restore him and He will pour out His grace and blessing to back to him. Let us be mindful of the condition of our hearts in every area of our lives. Ask the Holy Spirit daily to show you if you be in pride in any area of your life that you be not hindered in receiving guidance when you need it.

God is our refuge, our hope, our light!!! He will lead us as He has promised! Blessings to you this day.

***Wednesday, June 19th***

***"Walking In Integrity"***

by Dona Hake

*Today I will continue on the subject of guidance. I mentioned yesterday that we all need it and many times we face decisions in our life that can be tough. Decisions that not only affect you but others as well can cause fear to come to your heart. I believe with all my heart that the Lord can go before us showing us exactly the right thing to do. I came across this quote yesterday and I just loved it.*

*"God shall be my hope, My stay, my guide and lantern to my feet." William Shakespeare*

*If God is your hope, He is always ahead of you. If He is your stay, He is always all that you need in the present. If He is your guide, He is all that you need while you are moving and if He is your lantern to your feet there will always be steps in the right direction.*

*I think we must look at this as a lifestyle NOT just when you need to make a decision. Many times people go about their lives from day to day and do not consult the Lord on the simple matters. I believe the sooner we exercise the habit of looking to Him for guidance in as much as possible, our life will flow in such a greater way.*

*There are things as far as decision making that are just common sense wisdom. Sometimes I have to admit that there are times I see people doing things and I cannot understand how just out of common sense they do not realize that what they are doing is going to hurt them. Then there are things that the Word of God plainly lays out that we are to do and it is not a matter of even praying about. The Word of God is the ultimate Manual for our life and we are to live by it. When a believer decides to pick and choose the guidelines of his life there will always be troubles in the decision making department.*

*When you live, breath and move by the Spirit of the Living God you will be a person of integrity. You will always want to do the right thing. I am going to share two versions of scripture from Proverbs 11:3:*

#### *New Life Version*

*"The honor of good people will lead them, but those who hurt others will be destroyed by their own false ways."*

#### *Amplified Bible*

*" The integrity of the upright shall guide them, but the willful contrariness and crookedness of the treacherous shall destroy them."*

*When one chooses to be willfully contrary in the everyday affairs he will find himself in some crooked situations. There is absolutely NO, ZIP, ZERO need to scratch your head why people like this are in trouble. If you need any examples all you have to do is turn the TV on and watch the news. It is so grievous to see that when people choose a life of lies and crookedness that they are doomed.*

*We as believers need to choose life, choose His ways, choose His Word each and every minute we take a breath. The more we do this the more we will see our lives moving more freely with the Spirit of God. God is a God of all that is good, pure and lovely and we need to walk in that manner as well. Praying your day will be blessed as you walk hand in hand with Him!*

**Tuesday, June 18th**

**"He Shall Guide You"**

by Dona Hake

Everyone of us will face times in this life in which we feel we need guidance. No matter how young or old you are, you will be faced with feelings of not knowing which way to turn and you just want someone to point you in the right direction. I think the hardest times are when you feel you are trying to make an important decision in the midst of trying circumstances and there is no room for error. This can be a place where fear could enter your heart because you want so badly to do the right thing. Another time that decision making can be difficult is if you are dealing with a physical condition and you can't even think straight because you feel so badly.

It is of utmost importance that we get firmly established in the fact that God has promised that He would never leave us or forsake us. That means NEVER. Things may seem upside down in your life, but He is still there eager to still your soul. No matter how much you have messed up or how ever confused you may feel, His Word is good and He NEVER changes. I will say that again...He NEVER changes. Isaiah 58:11 Amplified Bible (AMP) 11 And the Lord shall guide you continually and satisfy you in drought and in dry places and make strong your bones. And you shall be like a watered garden and like a spring of water whose waters fail not.

When I think of a drought I think about severe dryness. It is those times when we are experiencing drought in our hearts that we need to determine ourselves to keep our eyes on Him. When you are faced with such times you have to remember a very important thing and that is to not be moved by what you feel. I think we need to understand that even in times where we feel unsure that we need to back up and hold fast to one truth and that is He said, "I WILL NOT LEAVE YOU OR FORSAKE YOU" and that means even in the times you are being tempted to feel He is not there for you. This simply is not true and do not

let the devil speak this lie to you.

Hebrews 11:1-2 Easy-to-Read Version "Faith is what makes real the things we hope for. It is proof of what we cannot see. God was pleased with the people who lived a long time ago because they had faith like this."

In those times in which we are tempted to be moved by what we do not see, we need to be assured that He is there. Let us look to Him and draw upon the strength of His Spirit and the refreshment that He offers. His presence will be like a gentle rain that will come and minister to you in your time of need. Who Jesus is and all that He gives will never fail us. We will be like a well watered garden and like a spring of water whose waters fail not.

There are many aspects of receiving guidance and I plan to continue on sharing on them over the next few days. God bless you as you keep your eyes focused on Him!

**Monday, June 17th**

**"Deeply Planted In Him"**

by Dona Hake

Colossians 2:7 " Have the roots [of your being] firmly and deeply planted [in Him, fixed and founded in Him], being continually built up in Him, becoming increasingly more confirmed and established in the faith, just as you were

taught, and abounding and overflowing in it with thanksgiving."

This scripture gives us such a picture of how our spiritual strength should be. I think of my garden as I read this. I just love my garden and all the beautiful flowers in it. Each one is different in its own unique way. One loves sun all day and one loves the shade only. When planting I took extra care where to place each one so it would thrive and grow to its potential. Yesterday I noticed one of my Gerber daisies just totally wilted so I gave it a bit more water than the others and today it is all perked up and beautiful again. Weeds seem to find their way no matter how much tending I give my garden so my diligence to keep weeds out determines the health of my flowers. So it is with the garden of our hearts.

We must seek to know Christ more and more each day that our spiritual roots grow deeper and deeper. We want our lives to be beautiful for Him so our spiritual "root system" is important to watch over. As we submit to the Lord and the counsel of His Word we will continue to become steadfast and unmovable. When the "weeds" of this world try to come in and choke the life out of us, there must be diligence on our part to rip them out and be watchful that they do not come back. Let us look at Psalm 1:1- I love how this portion of scripture so beautifully depicts the one that lives a guarded life before the Lord. He who is diligent over his soul will be like a strong tree with strong roots and he will not be moved.

Psalm 1:1-3

1 "Happy is the man who does not walk in the way sinful men tell him to, or stand in the path of sinners, or sit with those who laugh at the truth. 2 But he finds joy in the Law of the Lord and thinks about His Law day and night. 3 This man is like a tree planted by rivers of water, which gives its fruit at the right time and its leaf never dries up. Whatever he does will work out well for him."

Oh that our focus would be upon Him from the time our feet hit the floor until we lie down again in the evening. Oh how wonderful to think of my life being as a vibrant healthy tree planted by cool streams of water with fruit that ripens and God uses my fruit to reach those around me. Remember...He is growing fruit in

you, but it is in His timing. Don't be impatient with yourself. As you are obedient to Him, He is faithful and He will complete His work in You. It is as we remain steadfast and diligent that we can know that all that we put our hand to will prosper and we will bear fruit that will remain.

Thank Him today for the work that He is doing in your life and believe for Him to continue to work in you. Be diligent over your soul and stay in fellowship with Him from dawn to dusk. God bless you richly and believe for Him to do above and beyond all you dare ask or think! (Ephesians 3:20)

**Sunday, June 16th**

### **"I Will Not Be Moved"**

by Dona Hake Colossians 2:6 (Amplified) "As you have therefore received Christ, [even] Jesus the Lord, [so] walk (regulate your lives and conduct yourselves) in union with and conformity to Him." I love how the Amplified translation brings the word \*walk\* to life and further defining it as to regulate and conduct yourselves to live in conformity to Him. Sometimes a few words can cause you to stop and ponder a scripture in a deeper and necessary way. Many times believers are not able to stand and be strong because when all is going well or there is no pressure they do not stay consistent in maintaining and regulating what they have by faith. I would like to further define the word \*regulate\* according to the dictionary:

regulate: \*to control or direct by a rule, principle, method, etc \*to adjust to some standard or requirement, as amount, degree, etc \*to adjust so as to ensure accuracy of operation \*to put in good order

In order for us to be firm in our faith and always abounding in the work of the Lord we must live by His principles and always doing things by His rules. Our opinions about a matter in our lives or anyone else's holds no water in God's eyes. We must seek God's word and His opinion on everything we do. As we are

diligent to do this and we ask Him for discernment over our lives we will find that we will be hearing His voice as necessary when there are areas that need adjustment within us. I believe with all my heart that the Lord loves nothing more than to see us desiring to walk in obedience and uprightness before Him. Romans 12:2 (The Voice) "Do not allow this world to mold you in its own image. Instead, be transformed from the inside out by renewing your mind. As a result, you will be able to discern what God wills and whatever God finds good, pleasing, and complete."

Over the next few days (unless the Lord directs otherwise) I want to continue expounding on Colossians 2:6-8. I believe that one of the secrets to remaining strong in our walk as a Christian is to have a wholehearted desire to know that what we are doing is right in His sight. It is so easy to try to keep up with what everyone else is doing but this is not what God is asking. I can remember a poster I used to have hanging in my classroom that said, "What is right is not always popular, what is popular is not always right." Sometimes it will take strength and courage to do the simplest of things that are right because of the criticism you may face. Let us be strong in taking a stand for what is right. May we seek His ways, His directions and purpose to live by the rules of the Word of God. As we do so, our life will be blessed, strong and always abounding in Him.

God bless you and keep you as you serve Him this day!

**Saturday, June 15th**

**"The Strength of the Unmovable"**

by Dona Hake

We live in a day in which we as believers need to be very wise and discerning. There are so many things out there being offered and learned so that one can

cope with today's pressures and anxieties. We can be confident though that as sin abounds so does the grace of God and so the grace of God will abound in us as well. We must remain unmovable and always abounding in His work. Therefore, we must do all that we know to remain strong. Strength does not just happen in our spiritual walk. If we do not eat, drink and get proper rest our bodies would begin to get weak and our minds would grow weary. It is the same in spirit, we have to continue to nourish ourselves and do all we know to do that we may remain strong in Him.

In Colossians 2:6-8 (The Voice) Paul was calling the believers in Colossae to remain steadfast in their faith. "Now that you have welcomed the Anointed One, Jesus the Lord, into your lives, continue to journey with Him and allow Him to shape your lives. 7 Let your roots grow down deeply in Him, and let Him build you up on a firm foundation. Be strong in the faith, just as you were taught, and always spill over with thankfulness. 8 Make sure no predator makes you his prey through some misleading philosophy and empty deception based on traditions fabricated by mere mortals. These are sourced in the elementary principles originating in this world and not in the Anointed One (so don't let their talks capture you)."

As we continue in our journey we must allow the Lord to continue to mold us, shape us and we must draw upon Him for everything. We are witnessing a time in the world where like never before there are all kinds of outlets for relieving stress, receiving peace for the soul, and remaining a strong confident person. There are medications to keep you up and those that calm you down with side effects that could make one commit suicide. More and more people are turning to these things as answers and not even considering God to be the answer to their need or problem.

In this scripture I love how this version says to "spill over with thankfulness." Something has to be full in order for it to spill over. Let us be full and stay full of Him and determine ourselves to be thankful. Many times when the pressure is on

we may find our eyes being pulled and tugged away from that which is good in our life. I know you have probably heard this but I think it often when I am having a bad day and that is..."things can always be worse." Let us dwell upon the good things and many blessings that the Lord has bestowed upon us. Share what the Lord has done for you today and be a vessel of encouragement to the one that thinks their world is falling apart. Hurting people are looking for strength and they need to see people that live in real strength that comes only from a real God.

I will continue to share in the devotional tomorrow about being unmovable and flourishing in Him. Be blessed this day as you follow and serve Him. God bless you!

**Friday, June 14th**

**"...and I will cause you to rest."**

**by Dona Hake**

Matthew 11:28-29 Amplified Bible (AMP) 28 Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy-laden and overburdened, and I will cause you to rest. I will ease and relieve and refresh your souls. 29 Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me, for I am gentle (meek) and humble (lowly) in heart, and you will find rest relief and ease and refreshment and recreation and blessed quiet) for your souls.

This scripture tells me how Jesus understood the nature of man and man's temptation to do more than what he was created for. I think about times in my

life where there are just one too many things going on and you are trying to serve or keep up with things. I think the biggest mistake we can make is rely on our own ability and strength to accomplish things.

In verse twenty eight Jesus was giving an invitation to the overburdened and weary. I love how He was basically saying I will CAUSE you to rest. I will RELIEVE your soul. I will REFRESH your soul if you come to Him. It reminds me of Psalm twenty three where the "He makes me to lay down in green pastures" and "He leads me beside the still waters." The first step in the right direction when weariness hits our soul is to go to Him. Yes, simply GO to Him. Do not turn to your own means of rest and peace.

Jesus proceeds to tell us to take His yoke. Farmers used to yoke the young ox with the old experienced ox to train them. The old ox will take the major load and the young one will be walking along and learning from him. If you read this verses in light of this, it makes more sense. As we walk along side of Jesus and learn of Him things will go so much better for us. I think it is important to note that Jesus made a point to say immediately that He was gentle (meek) and humble(lowly) in heart. The opposite of these two things is the pride of man. So many times we resist God in areas and we try to just do things our way. We can not claim to have Jesus walking along side of us and insist on doing it our way.

Jesus wants us to truly submit to His way and His Word. Jesus set us free from the bondages of this world. If you are under the yoke of sin, guilt, failures, anxieties or worry you need to stop, humble yourself and hook up with Jesus. Jesus has set us free from that weight that you are trying to carry. Come to Him and cast that burden on Him. I also love the visual I get when I think of being yoked to Jesus. If I am truly connected and I am flowing with Him and hearing His voice I will walk without struggle in my heart. When hardship hits He will enable me to walk through it because He is carrying the load.

Walk with Him today. Walk close to Him and follow His lead. Learn from Him and hear from Him. The more you learn from Him, the more you will learn about yourself. God bless you and I pray you will have a wonderful day!

**Thursday, June 13th**

**"He Will Direct Your Paths"**

by Dona Hake

For the past few days I have been sharing about the peace that passes understanding. It is so wonderful that we can be saturated, permeated, and filled to the full with God's peace. I find it interesting that the Lord has so many blessings that can surpass our understanding. In other words they can not be figured out. With faith He wants us to just believe and not be moved by what we see nor should we be moved by what we do not see. It always comes back to the fact that we have to keep our mind, will and emotions out of the picture. We need to keep our mind, will and emotions all submitted to Him and continue to allow Him to transform us.

Today I want to share about Him straightening out your paths. Many times in our lives we may encounter feeling like we do not know what direction to go. You may feel you are in a place that you have never been before and it could potentially bring apprehension or fear to your heart.

Yesterday I was needing to travel to someone's home and since I am not familiar

with the area in which she lived I grabbed my faithful Garmin GPS . I love my GPS because I lean on it and trust it to get me where I need to be. I love how it tells me my estimated time of arrival. I love when it tells me I just made a wrong turn and speaks up to tell me it is going to recalculate for me. There have been a few times that I have ended up off course and I was a bit nervous but every time I have used my GPS it has gotten me where I need to be.

Yesterday, I knew the main road I would have taken to this young ladies house is quite a busy one and also nerve wracking to drive on. As I followed the directions of the GPS I was pleasantly surprised at all the beautiful back roads I found myself on. I had absolutely no clue where I was but I was enjoying it. It steered me totally away from the busy highway that I was wishing I did not have to travel on. If I would had been on these roads without my GPS I can honestly say I would had been in anxiety that I was possibly lost. I was blessed to arrive on time and I enjoyed it. If I had to travel back home the same way I would have had to totally trust the GPS because I was never on that path before.

As I was pondering this devotion and the following scripture I began to think how many times in life we just do not know nor do we understand what we are to do and we just need to simply trust Him and keep our mind, our smarts, and our opinion out of the equation. Proverbs 3:5-6 " Trust in the Lord with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight."

I encourage you today to trust Him with all of your heart and keep your mind out of the equation. Allow Him to take you places in the Spirit that you have never been before and enjoy the journey. Many times He takes us places just so He can show more of Himself to us. He want to surprise us with so many things as we just let go and believe Him to make our paths straight. The secret is to acknowledge Him in all you do keeping Him in all the decisions of your day. God bless you as you serve Him!

**Wednesday, June 12th**

**"My Eyes Are Fixed On Him"**

by Dona Hake

"You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in you, all whose thoughts are fixed on you! " Isaiah 26:3 Now I will make emphasis on two words within the scripture... "YOU WILL keep in perfect peace all who trust in you..."

As my feet hit the floor this morning the first thoughts I had were "Oh God, YOU ARE so faithful." HE WILL be faithful to be all that I need Him to be today. God always keeps His Word and in keeping it, it will always demonstrate His greatest in whatever area your need may be. Today once again I speak of peace but not just any peace. The world is full of ways to get peace. Some think if they go to the mountains and sit in the sunset they have peace. Some sit by the ocean and the view and smell of the ocean air may bring them peace. There are so many things people do for peace and rest and these two things are not wrong in and of themselves, but this is not where you find peace. The world has taught us how to meditate, how to properly think about things, on and on I could go about the ways of the world. God is the one that brings true and lasting peace. It is the peace that surpasses ALL understanding as Philippians 4:7 says..."And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

If you are a believer you must establish ALL that you need comes from Him and Him alone. Let's think about the fact that He created us and He knows us inside and out. One thing I have read many times is that worry and fear will just mess your health up. It messes up your thinking and how you view things. Our God did not create our minds to worry and fear, He created our minds to think great things, make decisions, think about our words before they come out of our mouths, etc... Our minds can do wonderful things or they can destroy us.

Now let's look at Isaiah 26:3 in the Amplified version... "You will guard him and keep him in perfect and constant peace whose mind [both its inclination and its character] is stayed on You, because he commits himself to You, leans on You, and hopes confidently in You."

I love how this version says that He will keep us not only in perfect peace but in constant peace. I think it is such a blessing knowing the in the midst of the stress and struggles a day can bring that the Lord can provide a constant peace flowing within us. There is something about this scripture that I cannot help to bring up and that is if God's peace is permeating you in such a way it is bound to show and flow to others around you. It is one thing to be thinking about the peace you need but you may be in a situation where those around you need it as well. What a beautiful opportunity to share about Jesus as they inquire of how you are able to keep your peace in the midst of a stressful situation.

There is an important factor that hinges to having this constant, permeating peace and that is that you must keep your thoughts fixed on Him. There again the Amplified version spells that word out a bit and it means that we need to commit our self to Him, lean on Him and hope confidently. We dare not allow our thoughts to roam without the restrictions of what God's Word says about the situation.

I cannot help but think about my German Shepherd with the word \*fixed\*. We have bunnies, squirrels, chipmunks, cats, groundhogs, ducks...all kinds of things on our property. If she sees something she desires I am telling you she fixes her eyes on whatever it is and you can not move her and YOU WILL not change her mind or distract her off of it. She will stare at it and just sit and stay focused. We can certainly learn from this analogy. We can also be unmovable and fixed on that which we desire and need from God.

Today, whatever it is you need I encourage you to fix your eyes on Him for it. Fix your eyes and heart on that expectation that is within your heart. Remember to keep your thoughts in check and make sure they are not roaming about. I thank God that He is able to help us to do everything He requires of us. We

serve a wonderful God. The Holy Spirit has come along side of you to help you and teach you and assist you throughout your day. God bless you as you serve Him today!

**Tuesday, June 11th**

**"Permeated In His Perfect Peace"**

by Dona Hake

Sometimes life gets in the way and we get tempted to lose our peace. Sometimes we just flat out lose it. I hate when this happens because I love when I know God's peace is permeating me and my day is flowing because of it. I am not talking about days that everything is going my way either. I am talking about even when things are falling apart at the seams. Yes, you can have God's peace even when things are falling apart at the seams. But there will be those days that you feel you have so much on your "plate" that you cannot do one more thing and then exhaustion hits. The past week has been like that for me. I would have to say I have been remaining with God's peace but yesterday it all started to go downhill for me. Usually I have this devotional created by very late in the evening and ready to post in the morning so here I am just starting it this morning. It's okay because I knew I just needed a good night's sleep and this morning I will be able to do this.

Let me start out with talking about God's peace that permeates me. This word "permeate" is one I love to use because it gives me a visual every time I say it. I usually say it when I am praying for someone that needs peace. What does the word permeate mean? It means to pass into or through every part of something to be diffused through, pervade or saturate. Last evening I was not feeling permeated with God's peace. I went to bed with concern I would not have this

devotional put together but here I sit as I am typing with a little grin on my face because this morning God's peace is all over me and I am feeling the inspiration that I need to do this and go on with the rest of my day.

Quite honestly I do not understand how anyone can live without God's peace permeating their heart and mind. I see sometimes that even His children just kind of get used to flying by the seat of their pants with their own composure and strength. That may get you into your day but I will say this, it will never sustain you like God's peace does. God wants to give us His ALL because He gave His ALL for us. He does not want to see us short changed in any way spiritually . It is our choice though if we choose to live without it, and quite honestly He will not twist your arm to make you live any differently. God is good, He is a gentleman and I know it really grieves His heart when we settle for less than what He has.

Today I am thankful. Not only do I feel permeated with His peace and strength to go on with another day, but I feel a fresh joy because I learned something about me. I learned I need to trust Him more and nothing should cause me to let go of His peace. Even doing good things can cause you to lose your peace if you are not doing it in the order and way that He desires for you to do it. Like they say, "Live and learn!" Tomorrow I will be sharing on Isaiah 26:3. This scripture will go hand in hand with today's devotional. I encourage you to think about the word \*permeate\* today! As you think about this word, I want you to think about God's peace. Is His peace permeating you or does it come and go? If we are not in God's peace it is because we have left it slip away. "You will guard him and keep him in perfect and constant peace whose mind [both its inclination and its character] is stayed on You, because he commits himself to You, leans on You, and hopes confidently in You." Isaiah 26:3

Have a wonderful day and stay permeated!!!!

**Monday, June 10th**

**"Search Me Oh Lord and know my heart"**

by Dona Hake

**Psalm 139:23-24 (NRSV)**

"Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts. See if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." I believe a very good prayer to ask the Lord on a regular basis is asking Him to search our heart and expose anything that would hinder our walk with Him. To me it is so liberating to know that my God knows me inside and out and I feel it is so important to stay humble before Him. It is as we remain humble that we can receive from Him what He sees and what we need to see. It is only as we grow in humility that He can stop us and correct us if we are asking Him for something that is not good for us or we are asking with wrong motives.

I am going to give you an example to help you connect with this thought. Did you ever have your child ask you for something they really really want. Let's say they ask you for a piece of candy about an hour before bedtime. If they are of age to understand you may begin to explain to them why they cannot have the candy. Let's say their reaction to your wise explanation is one of those "pretty please" looks that come over their cute little face and they proceed to try to convince you that they should have it. If you are a good parent thinking wisely you will put your foot down and say no. A loving parent that understands such consequences will put their foot down and that is the end of it.

I can remember talking to my one son when he was younger after he asked a question and he did not understand the answer I gave him. I said, "Sometimes you are not going to understand answers to your questions because you are too young to understand, but I ask you just trust me as your mother. You don't always need to understand before you agree. You need to trust me that I am telling you the truth and giving you the wisdom that you need for this matter" I would proceed to explain that submission to authority will make you want to obey whether you agree or understand. Likewise we are to submit to God because He loves us and we can trust Him. Sometimes this is how the Lord deals with us. He simply desires that we obey and do what He asks or asks us not to do and as

time goes by the understanding will come to us by the Holy Spirit.

As we stay conscious of God and let Him be our friend we will become more aware of His presence. When you stay aware of His presence, you will be inclined more to check in with Him and inquire of Him in the matters and concerns of your life. Today as you go about your day think about how real He is. Jesus wants to be your friend. Isn't that an awesome thought??? Think about how much He desires to hear your heart and how He desires that you hear His heart. Pray often and allow Him to search and know your heart that He can reveal Himself to you! The lyrics to this song should bless you in light of this devotional...

1. "What a friend we have in Jesus, All our sins and griefs to bear! What a privilege to carry Everything to God in prayer! Oh, what peace we often forfeit, Oh, what needless pain we bear, All because we do not carry Everything to God in prayer!"
- 2.
3. lyrics in part from "What A Friend We Have In Jesus"

Have a wonderful day!!!!

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**Sunday, June 9th**

**"The Deeper the Valley the Deeper the Strength"**

by Dona Hake Today I am being reminded that death is not the end, and when you know that the individual knew Jesus we embrace the hope that we will see them in Heaven some day. Losing someone is never easy but when it is a young person it is all so hard to grasp. Yesterday one of our family members went to be with Jesus and he was only twenty three years old. Sometimes life has a way of reminding you how helpless you can feel at times like these and how frail this life is. The Lord has lovingly and gently reminded me of the things He has spoken to me during a time of facing the death of a loved one in the past. These words return to me today to comfort my heart. I am sharing this with you because I feel I should. These words do not just apply to dealing with death but dealing with life itself.

Sometimes we will walk through things that make you stop and realize how you cannot live life without Him. It is only the Lord that can get you through any problem or devastating circumstance. I can remember the very morning I woke up and it was a dreary day. I sat on the edge of my bed with my hands over my eyes shaking my head wondering how I would make it through the day ahead of me. I just felt so sad because we had to break the news to my mother that she was dying. It was one of times in my life that seemed surreal but I knew I could walk through it with the help of the Lord. I can remember God gently speaking "The greater the valley, the greater the strength." I immediately could see the deepest depths of darkness and sorrow all around me. It was so deep and dark yet I could see and feel God's loving hand of strength lifting my soul up above the depths of sorrow.

There are still days that my heart returns to those words when I am facing such darkness and circumstances that make me feel overwhelmed. We can be comforted in our souls knowing that there is nothing that can separate us from the love of God. No matter how weary or sad our soul is, the love of God will cause us to rise above any situation.

The Word says nothing can separate us from the love of Christ. Romans 8:35 (The Voice) " So who can separate us? What can come between us and the love of God's Anointed? Can troubles, hardships, persecution, hunger, poverty, danger, or even death? The answer is, absolutely nothing." I love how Corey Ten Boom put it, "There is no pit that deep that the love of Jesus is not deeper still."

Many times I think of our frailty and how we worry about how we will handle things that are bigger than us. There are days that we dread our tomorrows and this is not how we as Christians are to live this life. I can remember when the Lord showed me that dread is another form of fear. Sometimes when you dread something it is merely because you feel you cannot do it or walk through it and that can cause fear to invade your heart. God gives us all the grace and sufficient strength that we need for everything we face in this life.

Corey Ten Boom also said, "Worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow; it empties today of its strength. " We need to stay permeated in His strength for it is sufficient. Guard your heart that you are not emptying today of the strength He has blessed you with.

I encourage you today to appreciate those precious family and friends in your

life. Love and appreciate them whether they agree with you on everything or not. Do not live in regrets. Purpose to give as much of the love of Christ to all those around you. This is why we are here...to live, love and serve Him. God bless you above and beyond your greatest prayers. (Ephesians 3:20)

**Saturday, June 8th**

### **"Entrusting Yourself To Him"**

by Dona Hake

I want to share with you about how powerful it is for us to totally entrust ourselves to God. I am talking about those times that you know that you cannot deal with something in your own ability anymore and also keeping yourself entrusted to Him when all is going well. Paul said in 2 Corinthians 12:10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong. Paul experienced a strength that did not proceed from his human strength but by the power of the Living God!

Jesus left us His example and we ought to walk and live by it. We need to remind ourselves that we do not exist on this earth for ourselves but for Him and His purposes. 1 Peter 2:21 (NIV) "...To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps." How can we know His steps unless we continue to feed upon His Word and fellowship with Him?

I am sure you have those days where you more prone to agitations that come either from people around you or just life itself. Sometimes people do not speak the kindest of words and their actions put you in a position of being irritated. Offenses and people's actions should not throw us off course and God desires His children rise above these types of hindrances that life itself brings. I think the devil clearly understands how offenses and agitations with one another pose the potential to render us ineffective. Let us guard our hearts against this.

Paul understood how to walk in supernatural strength when he was at his weakest points . It was when he was at his weakest that God was able to show

Himself strongest. When all of our strength leaves us because we are so tired and weary, it is at this time that God can lift us up above the situation and bring courage and victory to a situation. As we acknowledge an area of weakness or sin and we humbly give it to God, He will then begin to teach us and help us to rise above that particular hindrance.

Peter 2:22-23 "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth." When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. This is our example of how to entrust ourselves to God. Jesus was brutally punished for something He did not do. With the strength of the Father God and looking at God's perfect plan Jesus was able to rise above accusation and insults and He never once spoke a word to justify Himself nor did He retaliate. Jesus entrusted Himself to the Father God and we need do also do the same each and everyday of our lives.

Today I encourage you to meditate upon the great work that Jesus did for you and keep your mind renewed to continually keep yourself entrusted to Him in the good times and in the bad times. He is so faithful and He promises to never leave you or forsake you. God is good...ALL THE TIME!!!! Christ left the example so let us continue to walk in those steps.

**Friday, June 7th**

**"Yes, Your Heart Can Be Unmovable"**

**Romans 15:13**

Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

Today as I was driving and listening to the news my heart felt so overwhelmed listening to all that is going on in our country. More than ever we need to be in prayer for those in authority and pray that the Spirit of the living God will continue to expose any evil that needs exposed. Over the past few weeks many deceptions are being exposed and as painful as it seems to hear it is good it is being exposed.

If you are a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ I believe like never before He is calling us to live uprightly and upholding His truths in our heart. There is no time to waste and we have much to do in the Kingdom of God. I felt to share from Psalm 112 and I encourage you to read it for yourself. After pondering mostly all of the verses in this chapter, I am writing what this chapter spoke to me.

### **My Meditations from Psalm 112**

I am blessed because I fear the Lord greatly in my heart. I find great joy in serving Him and I love doing His Word. I believe that we should all find joy in doing the Word because I think that the Lord created His Word for us to live by and as it sustains us it will bring us much joy. I believe as we speak into our children's and our grandchildren's lives that they will be mighty and rise up for all to see the strength of the Lord in them. My hope is that my children and grandchildren will remember the Word of God that I spoke to them and they will embrace it all the days of their lives.

I believe that God's provision will be there for us and we will be lacking for nothing. Even when the things in this world do not look good I believe the the Lord is going to provide for us in a way that is going to cause the unbeliever's head to turn and they will come to us and inquire of this God that we serve. Even when it looks hopeless in this world, the Light of God's love will be illuminated in us as we give the Word of live, light and love. As we purpose to conduct our affairs in honesty and truth, He WILL BLESS EVERYTHING WE PUT OUR HANDS TOO.

We will not be moved because we believe He can keep us and He will keep us from being shaken. We know we are unmovable because we stand on a rock that no one can shake because we trust in Him and Him alone. When bad news comes we will continue to trust in the Lord our God, and yes bad news is going to come, but our heart will be comforted knowing that God's peace resides in us and He will be faithful to still the storms of our lives. Our hearts can be fixed and secure and totally free from fear and in the end we will see great triumph. As we walk uprightly in the Lord Jesus Christ I believe He will cause our righteousness to shine brighter and brighter and people will see the true Light. We will be stronger than before because we have learned to trust Him and embrace His grace, wisdom and strength in all that we do.

My heart and prayer for you today is that hope and encouragement would flood your soul. Look to Him and Him alone with all that pertains to life and godliness. He is faithful to keep you and complete His work in you. Have a wonderful day!

**Thursday, June 6th**

**"Watch Your Words & Hold Your Tongue"**

by Dona Hake

I want to continue on what I was sharing yesterday and that is using wisdom in our speech and in our conversations. The translation for The Message Bible makes this scripture short, sweet and powerful.

**Proverbs 21:23**

"Watch your words and hold your tongue; you'll save yourself a lot of grief."

Have you ever had those times you say something and even as it is coming out of your mouth you are thinking, "oh no! ...this is a big mistake, I should not be saying this." I once heard someone say that just because you are thinking something does not mean you have to speak it. There will be times that you actually do have the right answer for the individual you are speaking with but it is not God's timing for them to hear it. Many times especially in conflicts or disagreements God may ask us to be silent for that moment and speak only to Him in prayer over the matter.

I can personally testify of times that I felt that someone just had to "get it." You know that feeling when you feel you have the very answer that they need so why would they not want to hear it. When you hear the voice of the Holy Spirit silencing you, it would be wise for you to keep that individual in your heart in prayer. Ask Him for His timing that you are to deliver the words that you had on your heart. Sometimes the Lord has someone else that He wants to carry that message to that individual because they are more receptive to them.

We must always look back and remember the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives and think about all the people that the Lord instrumentally used to bring you to the knowledge of Him. Even as we continue to grow it is wonderful to know that those that love us hold us up in prayer believing for the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Let us be diligent to ask Him to help us everyday to continue to grow in the knowledge of His Word and how to rightly use it and speak it to others. In closing I want to share some scriptures for you to meditate on relative to our mouth and our words:

**Proverbs 8:8 (Amplified)**

"All the words of my mouth are righteous (upright and in right standing with God); there is nothing contrary to truth or crooked in them."

**Proverbs 10:11 (Amplified )**

" The mouth of the [uncompromisingly] righteous man is a well of life, but the mouth of the wicked conceals violence."

**Proverbs 10:31 (Amplified Bible)**

" The mouths of the righteous (those harmonious with God) bring forth skillful and godly Wisdom, but the perverse tongue shall be cut down [like a barren and rotten tree]"

**Proverbs 15:2 (Easy-to-Read Version)**

" Listening to wise people increases your knowledge, but only nonsense comes from the mouths of fools."

**Proverbs 15:28 (Amplified Bible)**

"The mind of the [uncompromisingly] righteous studies how to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours out evil things."

I just loved this handful of scriptures that all pertain to our words and God's wisdom. Hoping they will bless you as well. I pray that your day will be blessed abundantly as you serve Him!

**Wednesday, June 5th**

**"Do Your Words Build Up or Tear Down?"**

by Dona Hake

My inspiration for today's devotional comes from James 1:19 (New English Version) "Let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger..."

This evening it is late till I am getting this together and I thought I was going to share a different line of thought on this and I now I am feeling inspired just to share on how negative and hurtful words spoken can be so damaging to an individual. I think about how a single word can break a person's heart or a word has the power to lift one's heart up. As I look at this scripture I not only think

about how valuable it is to listen to a person's words but while they are speaking we need to listen to their heart. Many times we are way too eager to speak words in response to someone making them feel that you did not even listen to them. I think about the importance to maintain peace during conversations that are based in a disagreement because anger will always cause you to say things that you will ultimately regret. People may forgive you but sometimes the harm of the words spoken are very hard to forget.

Did you ever have times that you have walked away from a conversation and your mind kind of goes on rewind and you think about how you could of said something better. Sometimes we can be concerned that our words have been taken in the wrong way. Sometimes no matter how hard you try to communicate rightly there are always those individuals that are hurt easily. Nevertheless, words have power to make or break someone.

In my life I can remember even as a child unkind words spoken to me. It always amazes me how words have such power to hold you back. I had negative things spoken to me even as an adult that hindered me for a long time. It caused me to be lacking in confidence and kept me from stepping out in things the Lord was desiring me to do. I am so thankful that God has helped me break through all those negative words that had me convinced that there were certain things I could not do. I am so thankful for the many times my husband has encouraged me to do things that I never thought I could do. I too am thankful for those family members and godly friends that encouraged me with positive words as well

When we speak into an individuals life with encouraging words we may never know how God is using us and causing a break through for them.

### **Colossians 4:6 (AMP)**

" Let your speech at all times be gracious (pleasant and winsome), seasoned [as it were] with salt, [so that you may never be at a loss] to know how you ought to answer anyone [who puts a question to you." When we speak we should always be seeking His wisdom that we be kind and wise, then we can be able to speak or answer everyone the way God wants us to. Let us think about the words that come out of our mouths in casual conversation. Do your words encourage people's hearts and lift them up? Sometimes a kind word and smile to a stranger may be the only one they have received in a long time. I think about the importance of seasoning our speech as it were with salt. Salt is an enhancer, but it is also a preservative...something to ponder isn't it? I pray that your words that procede from your mouth will bless and uplift those around you. I challenge you to really be a good listener, and remember to not only hear words but lean your ear to the heart of the person speaking. Praying your day is blessed!

**Tuesday, June 4th**

**"God's Wisdom- What it is & What it is not"**

In James 3:13-18 it states the characteristics of worldly wisdom and God's wisdom. James said that if you are wise and understand the ways of our God that we should prove it by living an honorable life, doing good works with the humility that comes from His wisdom. He goes on to say that if one has jealousy and there is selfish ambition in one's heart that you should not cover it up with lying lips and boasting. I think this is an interesting thing to note because really when people exhibit lying and boasting you can count on it that there is more than likely the sin of jealousy and selfish ambition in their hearts. One translation puts it this way and that where there is envy and strife THERE IS confusion and every evil work.

Yesterday I mentioned that many times the trials that we walk through in this life will be conflicts with people. It may start out with a small problem, a disagreement, unforgiveness, etc...It is very sad when this happens and if people do not give such conflicts to the Lord, the outcome can be hurt and pain. I want to say that as a believer we need to always turn to God's Word and seek His wisdom and know beyond a shadow of a doubt that we are dealing in truth in our own hearts when you encounter a problem in a relationship. We must be totally honest with ourselves and know that we are not permitting our emotions to enter into the equation and that we are fixing our eyes on the Lord for His direction in the matter.

As I share I want you to understand that the Word of God is applicable no matter what your difficult situation is. We can never "pick and choose" where we are going to walk in His Word. God wants us to give our all to Him and He wants to be in everything we do. Conflicts can happen among family members or a person that has been your friend for a long time or it may be those you have to work with on your job. We must understand that the devil wants nothing more than to bring conflict, hurt, bitterness, unforgiveness, etc...into our lives any way he can. We must be wise as serpents and gentle as doves in dealing in any matter

where there is conflict going on in your life. After James said to count it all joy when you walk through various kinds of trials and problems that if you lack wisdom you are to ask God for His wisdom. God is more than happy to pour out His wisdom upon us as we ask Him in faith. Let us look at the qualities of God's wisdom:

**It is pure.**

God's wisdom is free of anything that could contaminate you. His wisdom is untainted by human thinking and the philosophies of this world. God's wisdom is not laced with your opinions or your past experience. It is straight from the heart of God.

**It is peace loving and gentle.**

Worldly wisdom will say that you have to continually speak your mind, be pushy and insist that you are right. When conflicts arise it should be in our heart to try to discuss the matter peaceably without arguing. In Proverbs 15:1 it says... "A soft answer turns away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger."

**It shows no favoritism and is always sincere.**

Worldly wisdom will tell you to take sides rather than viewing it objectively and from God's perspective. We must always be loyal to God's Word. If an individual is more loyal to a person than God, they will always compromise. One who is sincere is free of deceit, hypocrisy, or falseness and will be earnest. I love how James says then that those who are peacemakers will plant seeds of peace and then reap a harvest of righteousness. He did not say maybe it will turn out good in the end, He said that we would reap a harvest of righteousness in our life.

**James 3:18 (Amplified)**

" And the harvest of righteousness (of conformity to God's will in thought and deed) is [the fruit of the seed] sown in peace by those who work for and make peace [in themselves and in others, that peace which means concord, agreement, and harmony between individuals, with undisturbedness, in a peaceful mind free from fears and agitating passions and moral conflicts." I pray that this has blessed your heart today and I encourage you to meditate upon this. Many times we can read something like this and be thinking how we do not relate to it because we have no conflicts. If that is true, praise the Lord! I will say this though, and that is there are plenty of people out there that have family and friend conflicts going on in their lives and they need your help. Be a willing vessel to carry His Word of truth and light into their dark situation. God bless you as you serve Him today!

**Monday, June 3rd**

**"Wisdom...have you asked him for it today?"**

by Dona Hake I have been sharing from James 1 and we have been looking at the importance of counting it a joy when you walk through trials. I will share these scriptures again to refresh your memory:

**James 1:2-4 (The Voice)**

"Don't run from tests and hardships, brothers and sisters. As difficult as they are, you will ultimately find joy in them; if you embrace them, your faith will blossom under pressure and teach you true patience as you endure. And true patience brought on by endurance will equip you to complete the long journey and cross the finish line—mature, complete, and wanting nothing." Today I want to move on to what James says after this portion of scripture and it is a major key when you are in the midst of a problem and there are decisions that need to be made. He says this:

**James 1:5 (The Voice)**

"If you don't have all the wisdom needed for this journey, then all you have to do is ask God for it; and God will grant all that you need. He gives lavishly and never scolds you for asking." Many times we could be tempted to run from a test or hardship because we simply do not know which way to turn. It is so vitally important that we stay grounded in keeping our heart and mind full of God's Word. I am sure you have experienced that when you were walking through something that well meaning people will try to give you advice. We must be very careful though that we are being discerning and taking that advice and making sure it is godly wisdom and not human wisdom that proceeds from past experience. Wisdom does not come from old age and hard knocks. Yes, the older you get you do learn a few things but that is not how God desires that we develop it. It begins with knowing and depending on Him and allowing Him to speak into your heart about the direction of your life, your actions and your words.

It so important that we run to the Lord and cry out for His wisdom on a daily basis. Proverbs 8:17 (KJV) says "I love them that love me; and those that seek

me early shall find me." The "seek me early" is pertaining to asking Him for wisdom before EVERY TASK! He desires we make a conscious effort in our hearts and minds to be drawing upon His wisdom from the time your feet hit the floor when you get out of bed. I am not talking about being over spiritual either. I really do not think that God cares what I wear or what flavor of coffee I drink but I do know that He cares about a lot about my plans and thoughts for my day. I think He really wants to be in our life more than we realize. If you want God to lead you then you need to understand what His wisdom is on a matter. So I encourage you today that if you do not know what to do, ask Him. Ask Him what He thinks about your problem or whatever it is that you are dealing with. I warn you also to be patient and keep it in your heart before Him. He is faithful and He will answer. He knows exactly what the right thing is for you to do in your situation and you must simply trust Him.

Tomorrow I would like to share more about wisdom and how we have to have it to live this life. I will share the comparison of God's wisdom and the world's wisdom. The devil is trying his best to confuse us on this and we best be careful and discerning! Also, I want to share about how many times our tests and trials involve people. It involves situations that can become difficult and hurtful, but with God's wisdom we can get through the toughest of problems. Even though this is somewhat a negative thing I look forward to sharing about it because we need to continue to grow in God's wisdom in every area of our life.

God is good, He is with you and He would love to do above and beyond all you expect of Him today. Have a wonderful day!

**Sunday, June 2nd**

**"The God Who Surpasses Our Greatest Expectations"**

by Dona Hake Yesterday we looked at James 1:2-3 and how he wrote that we are to count it all joy when we go through trials. He said, "As difficult as they are, you will ultimately find joy in them. Many times when we are in a trial you

just can not see how any good could come out of it. It is those times when you are troubled and weary that you need to run to Him and lay it all before Him in prayer. As He begins to minister to you all that you need, you will be in a position to see more clearly. Many times He will begin to speak to you and show you His plan and it is above and beyond all that you could ask or think. When we take our cares to the Lord and pray we can expect Him to speak to us in our hearts and instruct us in the way that we should handle our problems.

We must always embrace the fact that no matter what we walk through Jesus has promised to never leave or forsake us. He sees from beginning to end and as you trust Him you can believe for Him to work on your behalf. In Ephesians 3:20 it says, "Now unto Him that is able to do above and beyond all we dare ask or think, above our highest hopes, prayers and dreams." I believe this scripture will help you see that your prayer over a situation can be an amazing opportunity for God to work on your behalf like you never dreamed. I like to look at it this way, think about a situation and what you could perceive as a good outcome and then think how God can surpass that your expectations.

I love when God turns a hopeless situation inside out and uses it for His glory. We must remember that in order for Him to work in such a way that we must be willing to give the situation to Him totally, exercise our faith, be enduring and patient. Within every trial and troublesome time there are the thoughts that we must deal with. Many times individuals just try to keep their mind occupied so they are not thinking about their troubles, and this is not God's way to deal with our troubling thoughts and cares. This would be nothing more than just staying preoccupied and we need to understand that God has a better way. It is necessary that we guard our hearts and minds from anxiety and the secret is in the following scripture:

**Philippians 4:6 (Easy-to-Read Version)**

" Don't worry about anything, but pray and ask God for everything you need, always giving thanks for what you have."

Today I would like you to think about the times where the Lord answered a

prayer of yours and it was not the way you expected. Many times I have found that potential problems ended in great opportunities to minister to people, and I was stronger than before. This is part of the work of the Lord in our lives as we stand strong in our faith and endure no matter what. It is a good thing that we meditate and testify of the goodness of the Lord in our lives. Tomorrow, I will continue in James chapter one. Have a wonderful day in the Lord!

**Saturday, June 1st**

**"Facing your problems in God's strength"**

Over the next few days I am going to share from one of my many favorite scriptures. To be quite honest this scripture used to kind of baffle me and I would think I can not understand why James would say to count it as joy when you are going through a bad time. The more of life that I have experienced the more I understand this scripture. Let's read it!

James 1:2-4 (The Voice) "Don't run from tests and hardships, brothers and sisters. As difficult as they are, you will ultimately find joy in them; if you embrace them, your faith will blossom under pressure and teach you true patience as you endure. And true patience brought on by endurance will equip you to complete the long journey and cross the finish line—mature, complete, and wanting nothing."

The first thing I want to say that really stands out to me is that we need to come to a place where we embrace hardships and tests with a right attitude. I think the hardest thing for us to do is embrace a difficulty. It seems like human nature just wants to live in a place where there is no conflict but we well know that on this earth that is not going to happen. I find it troubling when Christians want to

get angry with God when things are not going their way. The truth is, we live in a fallen world but we serve a risen Savior that is well able to bring victory in every thing we face! Jesus tells us in the Word that we will have trials and troubles and he tells us how to handle them. John 16:33 (AMP) 33 I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have [perfect] peace and confidence. In the world you have tribulation and trials and distress and frustration; but be of good cheer [take courage; be confident, certain, undaunted]! For I have overcome the world. [I have deprived it of power to harm you and have conquered it for you.]

Isn't it interesting that Jesus mentions that in the midst of tribulation, trials, distress and frustration that we are to be of good cheer or as James said it, "Count it all joy..." When you make the decision not to run away from your problems you can then make a quality decision that you are going to stand in faith. Many times during a trial you will deal with its pressures and as you continue to stand no matter what you are going to find that your faith actually begins to grow. As you remain strong in Him even during the pressure of the trial you will find it is going to cause you to see that you must have patience. Again, you will see when you are on the victory side of your trial that you walk away feeling not only that your faith has increased but that you are stronger in the fruit of patience. I like how The Voice translation said that true patience is brought on by endurance.

As I look at life it seems to go so fast but it really is a long journey when you think of all the different stages and events of your life. I encourage you to think about your journey as a Christian. Can you look back a few years ago and then think about where you are today and mark that there has been significant growth in the area of your faith and patience. It is a good thing for us to ponder such things that we can continue to grow and prosper in Him all the days of our life. Maybe you still need help with the whole thing of embracing difficulties. Just remember that as you desire all that the Lord has for you that He is faithful to help you understand it and walk in it.

I pray that this has blessed you and that you have a wonderful day in Him!