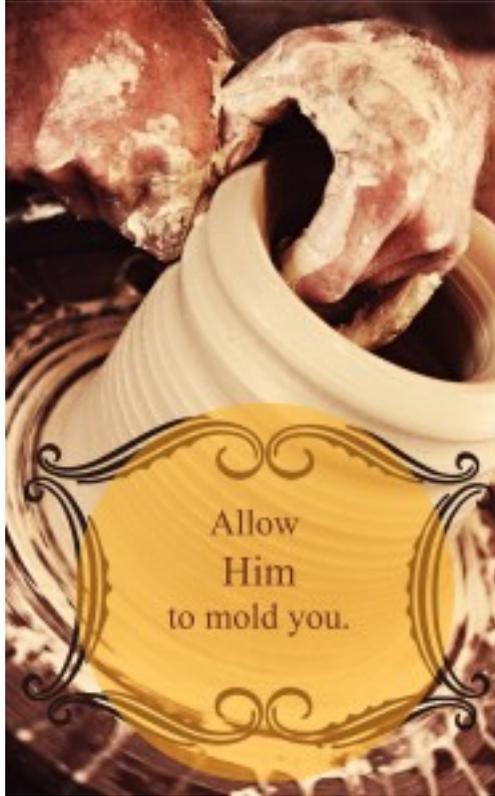


Saturday, October 26, 2014

"Allow Him To Mold You"

by Dona Hake



"We are just clay, and You are the potter.

We are the product of Your creative action, shaped and formed ..."

Isaiah 68:8 (the Voice)

We are the clay that He has to work with. Let us remain pliable that He is able to work and form us. One of the very first things a potter will do with that clump of clay is center in on his wheel. For us to be worked and formed for His purposes we could look at it this way...

Stay centered on His "wheel"

and you will be in the

center of His will.

As I pondered this devotional my heart began to think about four things that will position us that He can continue to mold us. I already stated the first and that is to stay centered or focused on Him. The other things would be

*stay humble before God.

*stay humble before others.

*see yourself humbly for this will guard you from self deception, which is the worst of all deceptions.

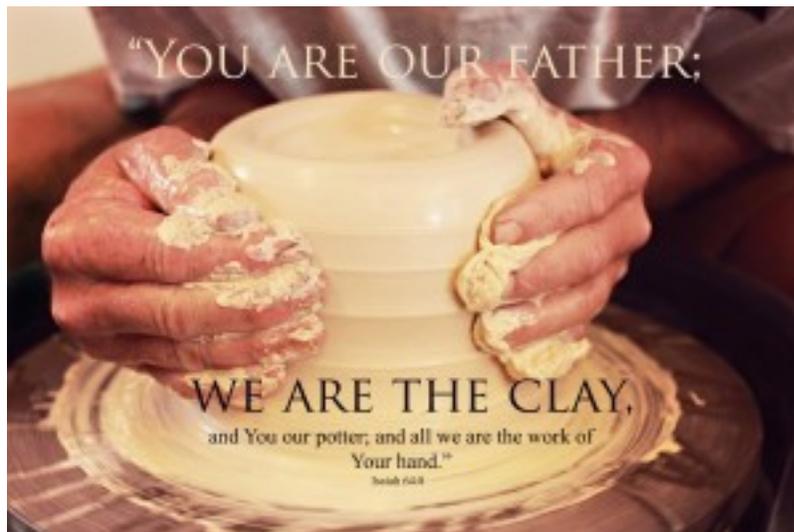
Let us humble ourselves in the sight of the Lord that He may continue to work and form us for His purposes.



Friday, October 25, 2013

"We Are the Work of His Hands"

by Dona Hake



If you believe that there is indeed a Creator and you know that He formed you within your mother's womb, then this image should speak volumes to your heart. Everyone of us are still under the molding and workmanship of the Master's hands. His hands are loving and they work with purpose. Some days we might not feel all that great on the outside and things may be a bit stormy on the inside but know this...God's loving hand is at work in your life.

Isaiah 64:8 (the Voice translation)

"Still, Eternal One, You are our Father.

We are just clay, and You are the potter.

We are the product of Your creative action, shaped and formed into something of worth."

Next time you feel tempted to question your own worth I encourage you to refer to this scripture. Next time you feel put down by others or you feel you do not measure up to the world's "plastic" images of success, remember this...

YOU ARE the work of His hand! God bless you.



Thursday, October 24, 2013

"The Lord Provides"

by Dona Hake



Luke 12:27-27 (TLB)

"Look at the lilies! They don't toil and spin, and yet Solomon in all his glory was not robed as well as they are. And if God provides clothing for the flowers that are here today and gone tomorrow, don't you suppose that he will provide clothing for you, you doubters?"

This scripture reminds us of God's loving care and how He watches over us and is there to provide for us all that we need in that particular moment of need.

I heard one of my favorite news contributors being asked a question and it went something like this...The interviewer asked him "If you had to give words of advice relative to this situation what would you say?" His humble face showed that he did not have the answer in that present moment that he was being interviewed but then he said, "The Lord would provide." Basically he was saying that if he had to have an answer to that question that he would know exactly what to say when that moment came. He knew God would put the words in his mouth to speak.

This man's words just refreshed my heart and reminded me that this is how life is to be lived. Many times things can look so complicated. Sometimes it seems we can fear making decisions. We may be afraid that we are not going to have the answers that we need. Yet if we trust Him to provide in the exact moment of need THE LORD WILL PROVIDE.

I felt challenged to just ponder this thought more. When I need wisdom...The Lord will provide. When I need strength...The Lord will provide. When I need direction...The Lord will provide. Think about all you may need and then begin to become strong in your faith that the Lord will provide!



Wednesday, October 23, 2013

"Lean Not..."

by Dona Hake



Sometimes the easiest thing to do is turn to your own thoughts and understanding in matters we face. Many times we can overlook the fact that God may be seeing our situation in an entirely different way and it would do us good to throw everything into reverse, be quiet and consult with Him. I think the most common mistake we can make is only taking difficult matters to Him because we think the easy ones we can figure out on our own.

I can not tell you how many times I thought a matter was a simple one to wake up and find it to be complicated. Somewhere along the line I was leaning on my own understanding and not trusting to see His guidance for that matter.

There are different ways that one can lean relative to their understanding. You may have a very strong opinion about something and that is okay but then again our opinions must always be based on truth or they can get us in trouble. Sometimes leaning on your own understanding can become like a crutch or a comfy place. You may be tending resist looking beyond your own ways unto God's ways therefore it hinders you from trusting Him.

God has blessed us with intelligence, creativity and know how but let us always be mindful to lean upon Him even in the smallest of matters that He is able to guide our paths. Today I encourage you to learn of Him and lean on Him!



Tuesday, October 22, 2013

"Do Not Lose Heart"

by Dona Hake



You feel like you are doing the good and right thing yet you also feel like you are spinning your wheels in the mud. I can remember hearing someone say that just because you are doing a good thing does not mean that it is necessarily the right thing. In other words, maybe you are not the one that should be doing it and you are wasting your time and energy. Yet if you are feeling in your heart to do good then the Lord's words are for us to hang in there and refuse to give up!

Galatians 6:9 (VOICE)

"May we never tire of doing what is good and right before our Lord because in His season we shall bring in a great harvest if we can just persist."

There is some key words in this scripture that can help us to do a check on ourselves when we are feeling weary when we are not seeing results. Are we doing "what is good and right before our Lord?" I could put it a different way and that is many times we are doing things merely out of obligation and this intentional good is just wearing us out.

When we know beyond a shadow of a doubt that deep within our hearts that we are to be helping or giving to someone, then we need to do it with all of our heart, and do NOT let our head talk us out of it. If it is being done out of obligation we need to step back and ask ourselves "why?" and deal with it from there.

Many times we just flat out bring on our own problems. God desires we be wise with our time, gifts, and energy! As you give of yourself and you truly feel you should, just keep on keeping on...because He promises a great harvest if we just persist.



Monday, October 21, 2013

"He Guides Me On the Path That Echoes His Name"

by Dona Hake



Psalm 23:3 (VOICE)

"He makes me whole again,
steering me off worn, hard paths
to roads where truth and righteousness echo His name."

He lovingly steers us away from worn, hard paths yet how many times do we return to them. Those worn, hard paths could be habits and patterns in our lives that have ultimately gotten us in trouble. These worn paths are those we have developed because of doing the same thing over and over again. God is calling us to allow Him to step in and guide us on the paths of His desire for us.

Maybe you have walked the path of a habitual worrier. Maybe your worn, hard path has been one of constantly walking in fear and anxiety over your future. Regardless of what it is we can make the choice to walk on the path that is guided by His hand. His hand deals only in truth and right things. His path does not make provision for us to walk in our own ability but rather draw upon His.

When I look at this image that I chose for this devotional it serves as an analogy of what our lives look like when we just keep doing things the same old way over

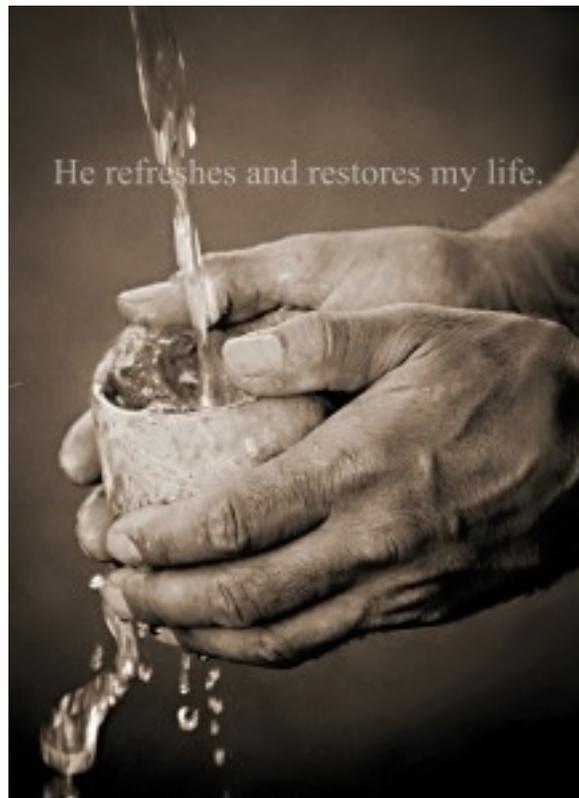
and over again. Let us look to His way, His paths, and we can live a life that is blessed because when we walk hand in hand with Him, that path echoes His name! God bless you!



Sunday, October 20, 2013

"He Refreshes and Restores My Life"

by Dona Hake



Psalm 23:3

"He refreshes and restores my life..."

Let us never take for granted the loving care that the Great Shepherd gives us. In times of weariness He is able to strengthen us from within. The living water that proceeds from His Spirit will satisfy and refresh your soul. As we stay

before Him we can always depend on Him faithfully overflowing our cup as we hold it out to Him.

As we give thanks for the many blessings that He has given us so freely, let us be mindful that there are those that are not experiencing His love and blessings. I just want to encourage you to make yourself available to be used by Him. I guarantee you that as you speak, love, and listen, all that He has blessed you with will spill over unto those around you.

Pray that the blessings that He has given you will bless those around you. God bless you this day!



Saturday, October 19, 2013

"God, the Health Of Our Countenance"

by Dona Hake



Many times our countenance is a give away of what is going on inside of

us. Usually people that know you well can almost always pick up that something may be wrong. When one loses hope or they experience disappointment, they can feel sadness and gloom flood their soul. In the Psalms David understood that no matter what happened that his hope had to be in God.

Psalm 42:11 Jubilee Bible 2000

"Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Wait thou for God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the saving health of my countenance and my God."

When one has good health in their body and mind they are experiencing soundness and vigor, freedom from disease or ailment. When someone loses hope they may also begin to fear their future and feel as if they are a failure.

2 Timothy 1:7

Amplified Bible (AMP)

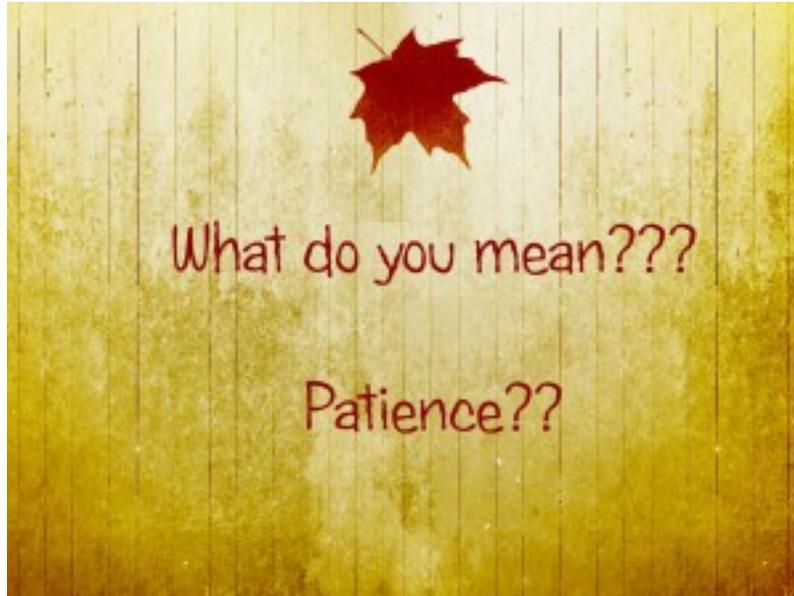
" For God did not give us a spirit of timidity (of cowardice, of craven and cringing and fawning fear), but [He has given us a spirit] of power and of love and of calm and well-balanced mind and discipline and self-control."

God is well able to keep our minds sound and our countenance full of health and vigor. He is able to give us hope for our future that we need not fear it. God bless you!

~~~~~ ♥ ~~~~~

Friday, October 18, 2013

"What Do You Mean???...patience???"



I talk to my oldest granddaughter a lot about this wonderful word. For little children it is so hard to comprehend having to wait for something. I can remember being little thinking to have to wait a week for something seemed to be an eternity.

The older we get we hopefully grow in our understanding of patience but yet there are many different ways that impatience can affect us. Impatience can cause us to do things out of God's timing and it can cause us to do things that will hurt us.

"Patience is a virtue  
but getting what I want  
when I want it is better."

Anonymous

I kind of thought this quote is an excellent example of how we can get into trouble when we do not exhibit patience. Getting what we want when we decide it to be the proper time can be disastrous. Yesterday I was able to witness how one's impatience could have caused us to be in a car accident.

While driving the granddaughters home we were in traffic that was backed up in both lanes. A woman in a vehicle decided to just turn right into my lane and

came very close to hitting us. Her impatience caused her to decide that she was not about to wait for a safe opening to make her turn. I could not believe how close we came to impact. Of course I laid on my horn and my granddaughter asked what was going on. "Grandma, what happened..." "Grandma, what do you mean she almost hit us???" I did my best to bring it down to her understanding but basically it all came down to helping her see that this person's impatience could have caused us an accident. Her response was "oh" with a look all over her face that seemed to make her really think. It was interesting how I could see how she saw something new and important about this very powerful word.

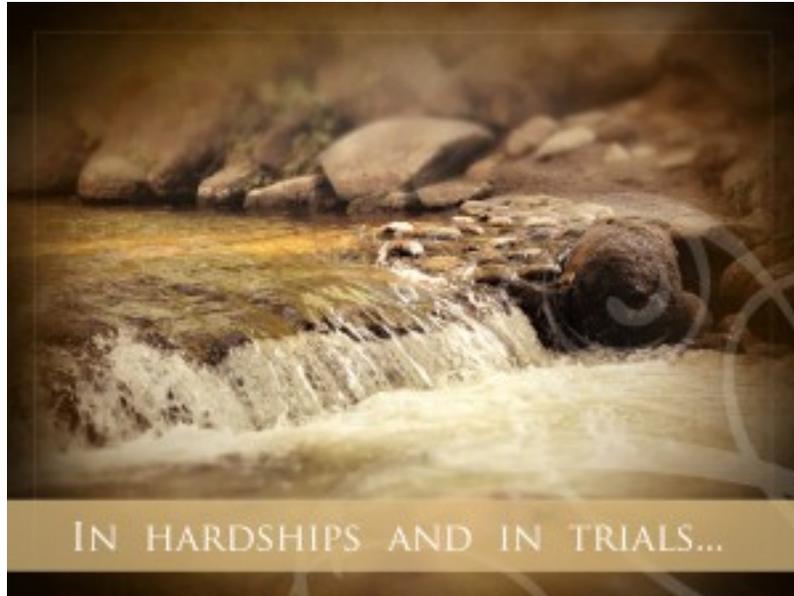
I love little opportunities as these to teach children what the consequences of being impatient and doing your own thing can do. You see, no matter how old you are if you are impatient and want things when you want them, it could cause big problems. I want to continue to grow in the virtue of patience, how about you?



Thursday, October 17, 2013

"In Hardships and In Trials"

by Dona Hake



I made mention yesterday of the saying "Unless you have walked in another's shoes..." Many times we can be quick to say what we would do if we were in their shoes. This type of reaction can be damaging, yet there is a flip side to this that I want to share. There may be those times that you may have walked through same hardship and God showed you great comfort, strength and brought victory to you. You feel an identification with them and it is your heart's desire to help them in their hardship.

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 (TLB)

"What a wonderful God we have—he is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the source of every mercy, and the one who so wonderfully comforts and strengthens us in our hardships and trials. And why does he do this? So that when others are troubled, needing our sympathy and encouragement, we can pass on to them this same help and comfort God has given us."

I can remember my first encounter with death taking a very special person away from me. My grandmother was so special to me. It was the most painful thing seeing her fade away yet I began to understand things and see things like I never saw them before. My heart was touched with joy as I began to get a deeper revelation of the hope that I would see her again someday in Heaven. Even painful experiences can reveal deep things that we struggled understanding before.

When you walk through valleys and He walks beside you and ministers strength and comfort to your heart, remember to look to pass that on to one that may need to hear your testimony. Your words may be that spark of hope and strength that will ignite courage within their hearts and cause them to hang on and cling to their faith. I encourage you to hold forth the testimonies of how He brought you through when all seemed hopeless. Blessings to you!

~~~~~ ♥ ~~~~~

Wednesday, October 16, 2013

"This Is Love"

by Dona Hake



There will be those times that we deal with people in which we fall short of patience. Depending on how offensive a person may be, you may be tempted to think you cannot even find it in your heart to put up with them let alone pray for them. This is when we have got to let the Lord help us see through His eyes that we can indeed do the right thing.

There is an old saying that goes something like this..."until you walk a mile in that person's shoes..." Sometimes we need to step back and consider that sometimes people and their actions are a result of their soul being devastated somewhere within their lifetime. Their behavior may be marked by scars that have never been healed. The Lord has helped me many times in how I view

things when I back up and think that maybe that person's behavior is a direct result of them lacking the help they needed at a vital time in their lives.

"Love bears up under anything and everything that comes, is ever ready to believe the best of every person, its hopes are fadeless under all circumstances, and it endures everything without weakening."

1 Corinthians 13:7

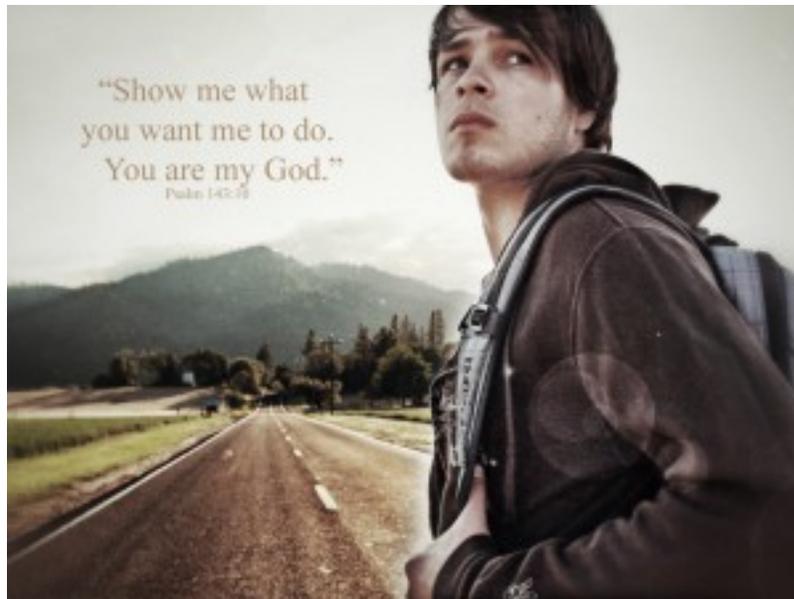
God help us to see people through the eyes of your love and not our own expectations. Give us hope that never fades that we may endure without weakening!

~~~~~ ♥ ~~~~~

Tuesday, October 15, 2013

"Lord, Show Me..."

by Dona Hake



Many times we can be "packed up" and ready to go but we are still uncertain of the direction we are to take. Fear can grip our hearts that if we make a wrong decision that it could affect our future. We need not be be plagued with such fear for He has promised to lead and guide us.

Psalm 143:8-10

Easy-to-Read Version

"Show me your faithful love this morning.

I trust in you.

Show me what I should do.

I put my life in your hands!

Lord, I come to you for protection.

Save me from my enemies.

Show me what you want me to do.

You are my God.

Let your good Spirit lead me over level ground."

Putting our life in His hands means us believing that He knows the right thing for us and all we need to do is simply obey Him. This scripture says that He will save us from our enemies. We all have "enemies" to our soul and you may have some people that are not real fond of you. Rest in Him and He will help you work through anything that would try to hinder you and He will cause you to be victorious!

A few devotionals ago I had mentioned that you cannot drive a car staring into your rear view mirror. So it is as we see the path before us we cannot allow the failures of our past to keep us from going forward. Let Him lead you by His goodness into His will for your life. Blessings to you!

~~~~~ ♥ ~~~~~

Monday, October 14, 2013

"Can You Afford It?"

by Dona Hake



When I ask myself "Can I afford this?" I usually quietly think it through, and I usually proceed with the following questions..."Do I need this?" "Do I have to have it?" "Should I keep this money for something else?" Personally I feel this is good wisdom for the pocketbook but what about the things you think you can afford that involve the issues of life and your soul is going bankrupt because you are affording yourself things that you should not be allowing.

To afford something means to be able to do, manage, or bear without serious consequence or adverse effect or to be able to meet it's expense.

There are times I find myself thinking or concerning myself about things that are not necessary. It's called "worry." Spending time worrying is spending an energy that we were never created to bear. It will steal and destroy your peace, joy and keep you from living as God intended you to live. There are those that think they can afford to gossip and speak behind someone's back rather than sitting down with them and trying to work it out. This too is another costly one called broken

relationships. Then there are times people think they can afford unforgiveness in their hearts. I would rather spend the love that God has given me and just forgive even if the person refuses to talk. The end result is I still have my peace, joy and all the positive energies that God has given me to walk this life.

I encourage you today to think about the things in your life that you may think you can afford to do or not do and it is robbing you blind. You need to put your foot down in your heart and say, "I cannot afford this, therefore I will not do it!" I know God wants us to live free, joyful and at peace and it is only as we guard our hearts that this will be fulfilled. God bless you!



Sunday, October 13, 2013

"The Greater Love"

by Dona Hake



My last wedding I shot I was going to be photographing the bride in this room that was the most unique little room. It was completely surrounded with stained glass. I wanted to do a test shot to check some things with lighting so I just

aimlessly fired at the stained glass. It was not until yesterday during editing that I realized that I aimed at such a powerful scripture written in the stained glass. On the beautiful pieces of cut glass were the following words:

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

John 15:12-14 (KJV)

I am glad I have this image because sometimes God uses things like this to remind me of His love in unique ways and it reminds me to never try to love in my own ability. Many times we need to be stopped and reminded of what life is really all about and purpose to live as He has asked us to. It reminds me that even when I was not His friend, He still chose and purposed to lay down His life for me. Love does not happen by accident. Love happens when one purposes to love.

He asks that we live and love sacrificially for those that He has put in our life. Great love will give you great purpose. Great love will cause you to do things you never thought you could do. God's love will bring purpose to your heart and your desires will change. It is good to know that He has promised to empower us with this great love as we live for Him and serve Him! Remember...He is well able to do above and beyond all you dare ask or think and that includes loving like Him. God bless you!

~~~~~ ♥ ~~~~~

Saturday, October 12, 2013

"It's That Simple"

by Dona Hake



I have heard it said that 67% of people hate change. I kind of feel that holds true. I really can not say where I stand on this thought because some days I like to see things a bit unpredictable yet there are other days I hate the kind of changes that can come in this life. I am sure you too could agree.

Sometimes people change. If it is for the good, that is wonderful but what about when people change and it is not so good. There may be people that you felt you knew them so well and now they have changed and your friendship no longer seems to be the same. When things change in this life and it brings pain to us it can make you feel unsettled and insecure.

I am so thankful that Jesus never changes. His love never changes for me. No matter how bad I mess up, He still loves me. I am glad that He never changes where He is at. He is always by my side. I am so glad that I can count on that. His ear is always towards me when I pray. I am glad that He did not change on this matter because it would be upsetting to know that He decided not to listen to my heart today. On and on I could go but it's just that simple...

Jesus never changes.

I hope this stirs you to think about the concrete fact that He is faithful and there is no changing. The world may change and we all well know that it is. There may be things that are changing and it is beyond your control to make it the way it was. But take comfort in the fact that the God of the Universe NEVER changes...it's that simple.

Hebrews 13:8 (DARBY)

" Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and to the ages [to come]."



Friday, October 10, 2013

"Your spirit - A Lamp To the Lord"

by Dona Hake



We all have those friends or family in our lives that know us so well that even the slightest change on our face is a dead give away that something is wrong. If you are trying to hide pain or feelings, this can be very difficult. Many times people try to keep problems under wraps simply because they do not want to deal with themselves or they may be afraid of what people will think of them.

Today I am reflecting on a loving God that knows me inside and out and if I want

the real truth about where I am "at" I need to consult with Him on a regular basis. You see, He knows me better than anyone and He knows you better than anyone! Good or bad, He sees it all yet He still wants to always be there for you.

Psalm 139:1-6 Living Bible

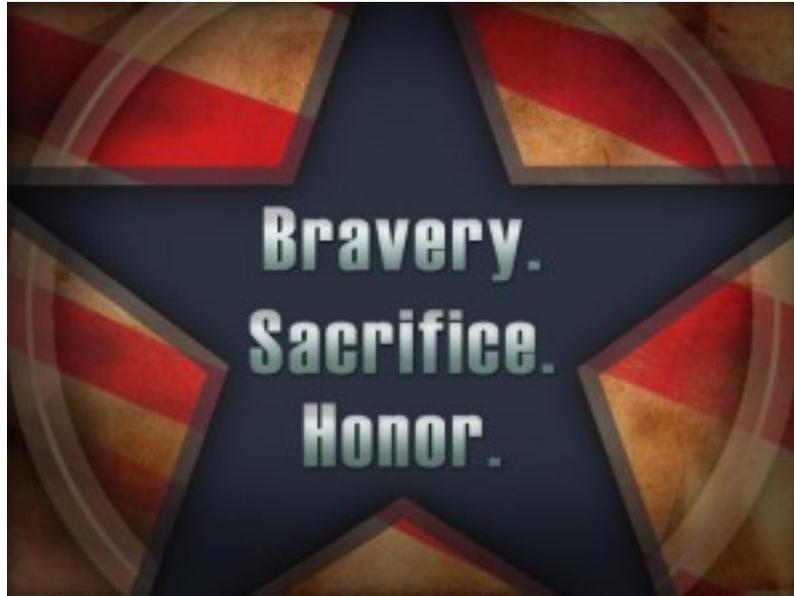
"O Lord, you have examined my heart and know everything about me. You know when I sit or stand. When far away you know my every thought. You chart the path ahead of me and tell me where to stop and rest. Every moment you know where I am. You know what I am going to say before I even say it. You both precede and follow me and place your hand of blessing on my head."

Also in Proverbs 20:27 it says "Your spirit is like a lamp to the Lord. He is able to see into your deepest parts." Or we could look at this as He examines us very carefully and searches our deepest thoughts. If one desires to live in self deception and pretending all is well, this fact about God could be liberating to them but sometimes people run from Him because of this.

It is such freedom to just be honest with God, yourself and people around you. I love how Psalm 139 says that He charts the path ahead of me and tells me where to stop and rest. He knows it all...from A to Z and He promises to walk beside you and give you every bit of wisdom that you ask for. I don't know about you but I am glad that my best Friend knows everything about me and still vows to always be there for me. What a friend He is!



Thursday, October 9, 2013  
"Give Honor Where Honor Is Due"  
by Dona Hake



***Romans 13:7***

***Easy-to-Read Version***

***"Give everyone what you owe them. If you owe them any kind of tax, then pay it. Show respect to those you should respect. And show honor to those you should honor."***

My heart has been moved to share about honoring those that have served our country, those who are presently serving our country or those that have paid the ultimate sacrifice while serving. I think it is important that we think of such things not just on holidays but on a regular basis. My heart has been grieved over the past few days as families of fallen heroes were abandoned by America. My heart and prayers go to those families as they too are paying a price. If you have been following the news you are well aware of what I am referring to.

Today while I was working on something my cell phone rang and I did not recognize the number. A gentlemen that called mentioned he saw my phone number on the back of my car advertising my photography but the reason he called me was because of the bumper stickers on my car that proclaimed we were Army parents. He proceeded to thank me for the courage to put the

stickers on my car and also thanked me for the service of our son. I shared with him that our son served in Iraq and how we were so proud of his service and we are thankful he returned safely.

I like to keep the stickers there just because I love them and they remind me of his service. This kind gentleman asked me to please thank my son. My heart was just so blessed that someone would take time to call me, a total stranger and express thanks. As we shared on the phone he too was grieved over the issues of our military families not being handled with honor and respect during such a painful time.

On Saturday I also saw a woman walk up to a perfect stranger wearing a T shirt saying he was a vet. She reached her hand toward him and said, "May I shake your hand?" I can only imagine how this must have blessed him. She went out of her way to show honor in a very simple yet respectful way.

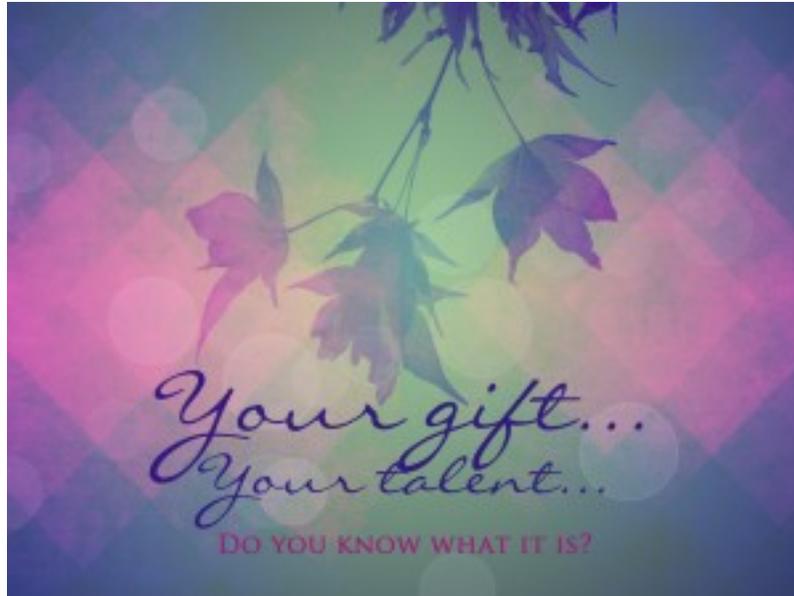
I encourage you to honor those that are serving. Honor them for their courage, their selflessness, their willingness to pause their life and totally commit themselves for the freedoms of our country. It costs us nothing to reach our hand out to them and speak words of respect, thankfulness and honor. They deserve it. Don't wait for appointed holidays to do this....carry it in your heart always. God bless our military.



Wednesday, October 9, 2013

"Do You Know What Is In You?"

by Dona Hake



I love thinking about how each and everyone of us are so uniquely made and there are no two of us out there! God had very special plans when He made you and within you He tucked special gifts and talents. Sometimes we discover these things on our own and yet there are those that have been blessed to have people in their lives to help them see what was in them. Regardless of how talents and gifts are discovered in an individual, they are to be used and given to bless others.

Recently I have been thinking a lot about the peer pressures of this world especially on our young people. How sad for our youth to feel justified to be consumed with thoughts about the latest clothes, shoes, hairdos, technology, etc.... On and on I could go. I think about how absorbed teens and even our younger children seem to be with this and it just grieves my heart. What is even sadder is when those of us that are not so young any more feel tempted and pressured to do or look a certain way or have particular possessions. I am telling you...this is so wrong!

I think it should be a joy to everyone of us just to know that we each have a special something within us and the world is waiting for us to express it. I encourage you to find out what special gifts and talents are within you. We also need to seek out ways to encourage those around us that have gifts and talents hidden within them. Maybe they need you to help them see. Our youth need us like never before to help them, encourage them, and develop them.

I am going to leave you with a powerful quote and I pray it will touch and

challenge your heart as it has always challenged mine.

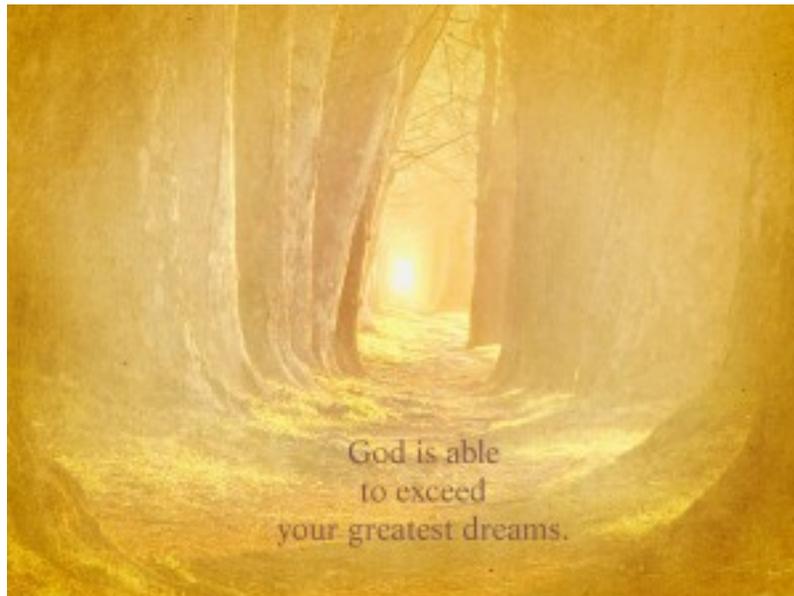
"Creativity has been built into every one of us; it's part of our design. Each of us lives less of the life God intended for us when we choose not to live out the creative powers we possess." Ted Engstrom



Tuesday, October 8, 2013

"He Is Able To Surpass Your Dreams"

by Dona Hake



No matter who you are and no matter how old you are, God desires that you have dreams. Sometimes people are afraid to dream because they might of had dreams that have been crushed and they are afraid to dream again. I would

like to share with you my favorite scripture.

### Ephesians 3:20 Amplified Bible

**"Now to Him Who, by (in consequence of) the [action of His] power that is at work within us, is able to [carry out His purpose and] do superabundantly, far over and above all that we [dare] ask or think [infinitely beyond our highest prayers, desires, thoughts, hopes, or dreams]—"**

Every time I read this I feel fresh hope and I am reminded how great my God is. I love the word *superabundantly* in this portion of scripture. It is one thing for God to say He will do something in abundance but *superabundantly* speaks of how He desires to go the extra mile to do something super special for us.

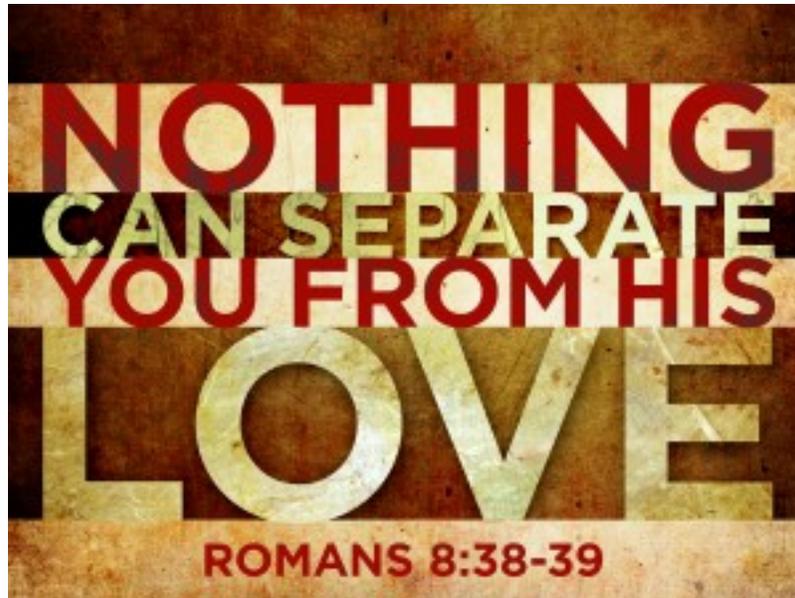
He is able to go far above all we dare ask or think. Sometimes we keep our prayers and expectations at this comfort realm and I believe He desires that we purpose to go further and think outside the box and believe Him for that which is more than the norm. He wants to go far and above the average dream, He wants to go exceedingly above all we are expecting.

He desires to go infinitely beyond our highest prayers, desires, thoughts, hopes, or dreams. When all of these things are in alignment with His will I believe with all of my heart that this is when His hand will touch our lives in ways that we have never known. As we pray, let us always be mindful to pray according to His will and His purpose for our lives and let us live in expectancy of great things to come!



"Nothing Can Separate Us From Him"

by Dona Hake



***Romans 8:38-39 Easy-to-Read Version***

***"Yes, I am sure that nothing can separate us from God's love—not death, life, angels, or ruling spirits. I am sure that nothing now, nothing in the future, no powers, nothing above us or nothing below us—nothing in the whole created world—will ever be able to separate us from the love God has shown us in Christ Jesus our Lord."***

In this life in which things can be unpredictable we can count on the fact that our God is faithful. Our God never changes! He has promised He will always be there for us no matter what.

Maybe there are those of you that have had friends or family that you have been so close to and yet something happened and you were divided. You had no choice in the matter and things were never the same. Jesus promises to always be our friend no matter what. No matter how bad you mess up, He just promises to never leave your side.

Maybe you have had someone you dearly love die and you live with the pain everyday of missing them. On this earth we will all deal with this because in life there will be death. Yet even in death when we know Him we still are not separated from Him. Also it is a joy to embrace the hope of knowing we will see those that have gone before us and we will reunite with them. Oh what a blessed day!

I love how this version of Romans 8:39 says "nothing in the whole created world WILL EVER be able to separate us from the love of God. What a comfort and strength it is to know that we can serve a God that absolutely refuses to separate Himself from us nor will He allow anything to EVER come between us. Hoping this meditation will infuse you with renewed hope of what a wonderful God He is . God bless you!



Sunday, October 6, 2013

"Sometimes We Miss Opportunities"

by Dona Hake



I believe with all my heart that many times there are opportunities right under our noses and we miss them simply because we have our lives so planned and scheduled. Sometimes it is simply because we are hung up on why something you planned did not work out. Maybe we need to make sure that God is in all of our plans because things go so much better when He is! I think there are many times we miss opportunities in the midst of things going wrong for us. Those hold ups, detours, things that just turn your day upside down can many times be

opportunities in disguise.

**"One of the greatest and most comforting truths is that when one door opens, another closes, but often we look so long and regretfully upon the closed door that we do not see the one that is open for us."**

**(Anonymous)**

I think the one thing this quote really speaks to my heart is that we really need to pay attention to everything going on around us. Of course we need to plan but careful that you are allowing your life some free time that the Lord can use you in ways that you may not have imagined.

Many times hindrances may actually be an opportunity and God can take that opportunity and turn something that was meant for evil and use it for good. No...I am not saying God causes bad things to happen but things can happen that are disrupting and if we keep our attitudes right He is able to create opportunities in the midst of a problem.

**"Any fact facing us is not as important as our attitude toward it, for that determines our success or failure."**

**Norman Vincent Peale**

I encourage you to think outside of the box and look for fresh opportunities that come in the midst of difficulty and be a blessing to everyone around you! God bless you.

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Saturday, October 5, 2013

"Thoughts That Hinder"

by Dona Hake



We need to recognize the times in which our thoughts need to be made quiet. There may be times that your soul is being tormented by your cares so badly that it seems hopeless to make any effort to get your peace. Sometimes it can feel like anxiety in your soul is as a raging sea in a bad storm. Yet God tells us to be still and know that He is God.

Psalm 107:29

**"He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves
thereof are still."**

Yesterday I shared on casting your burden upon the Lord. I know that God did not design our bodies to carry the weight of problems, worries and anxious thoughts. Any person that works in the medical field would confirm that much sickness both mental and physical are caused by stress and worry. Many times people become bitter because of the thoughts they continue to entertain. Those thoughts have the power to keep your heart in unforgiveness which is very dangerous to one's soul.

A quieted mind is so valuable. I saw a quote one day and I love it.

"The same letters that are in the word

silent

are in the the word

listen."

Today I just want to leave you with a simple yet powerful thought. If we would just be **silent** before Him and that would mean silencing your noisy, anxious thoughts you are then positioning yourself to **listen** to what He wants to speak to you by His Spirit. Think about it. When the anxious thoughts try to distract and confuse you, just stop and be quiet before Him for He desires to permeate you with the peace that passes all understanding. God bless you.

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Friday, October 4, 2013

"Casting Our Burdens"

by Dona Hake



Have you ever carried or lifted something too heavy and you paid a price for it? The price being an injury is what I am speaking of. I used to have this terrible habit of thinking I could just move or lift things that I had no business trying to do because it was beyond my physical strength.

I can remember when we moved into our new home and my husband and son had left for India shortly after the moving day. I was somewhat excited that I would have all kinds of time to unpack and yes....move things around. Being unwise, I tried to carry a piece of furniture from point A to point B and I ended up really hurting my back. I experienced some unnecessary pain and inconvenience just because I lacked wisdom and did not ask someone else to do it for me.

**Psalm 55:22 (TLB)**

**"Give your burdens to the Lord. He will carry them. He will not permit the godly to slip or fall."**

Many times we do this very same thing in life with our cares. The Lord is walking along side of us saying, "Here...I'll carry that for you!" Your response..."No, I can do that myself." The Lord **will NOT** just take it from you. You must willingly give it to Him and let Him carry it. There may be those times you hand it over to Him and then as He walks beside you, you reach over and take it back Him. When we try to carry life's burdens we will surely suffer for it and it can be painful. I am quite sure we have all done this before.

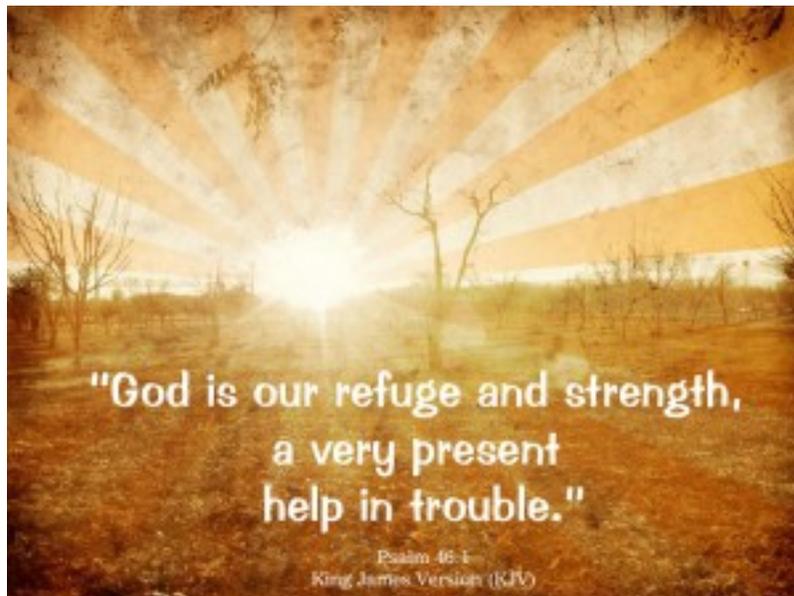
God desires to carry all of your burdens that you would be free to live without care and be totally sustained by Him. I encourage you today to give it all to Him that your hands and heart be totally free to serve Him. God bless you!



Thursday, October 3, 2013

"God Our Help"

by Dona Hake



He promises to be with us when we need help. Thank God for that! Many times when we read scriptures like this we may visualize God coming to our rescue when we are up against battles in our lives and thank God He is faithful in those times. Yet today I want to share about how He can help us with something that we can all get in trouble with.

I am speaking of allowing yourself to be angry about things. You may have just thought..."not me!!! I never get angry!" I do not care how strong you think you are...anyone can give way to letting anger bring you to the point of lashing out and saying or doing something you will be sorry for. The Lord wants to help us in every aspect of our lives.

Words and actions done from anger can be devastating and it has the power to destroy the closest of any relationship.

**Proverbs 16:32 Amplified Bible**

**"He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty,  
he who rules his [own] spirit than he who takes a city."**

It takes strength within us to walk away from a situation that has caused you to be angry in your heart. It takes great strength to just keep your mouth shut when you would rather just let the words fly. Ephesians 4:26 says "When you are angry, don't let that anger make you sin..." It is in those times that we recognize that we are ready to boil over that we need to quickly call upon the Lord to help us because we are our own problem at that point. He desires to develop within us self control over anger and walk in victory in that moment.

I thank God that He desires to be there for us when we are at our lowest points and our weakest. He loves us and He wants us to call upon Him in any time of need. God is good!



Wednesday, October 2, 2013

"Change Happens"

by Dona Hake



**"...a time to plant and a time to pluck up what is planted..."**

### **Ecclesiastes 3:2**

Yesterday as I pulled up in front of my house with our granddaughters, our oldest granddaughter leaned forward in her car seat and craned her little neck to look through the car window to see all the flowers in my front yard. "Grandma, your flowers are so awesome!" she said. I answered her, "I know Marissa, they are so pretty aren't they?"

You see she is having a very hard time understanding why they are starting to go away. I have tried to explain to her about seasons changing and this is just what happens. Yesterday I shared with her that the pretty flowers just cannot stand being out in the cold but they will be back in the spring. I tried my best to explain that they were planted, they bloomed, but now it is time for them to go away. She gave me a somewhat sad, little face but accepted what I said.

Last week while in the back yard she noticed one little clover flower laying on it's side and she quickly ran over and scooped dirt all around it and gently took her little fingers and made a little mound of dirt to support it and make it stand up. She proudly stood back and said, "There!!!" It was so sad to watch her little face when she came back the next week to find it not there. Again, I explained to her that the time for these little flowers is about to be over but that season will return.

I think what the Lord showed me most through my granddaughter was just

observing her precious little face and trusting eyes as I tried my best to explain to her the process of change. Did she understand it all? Absolutely not...she just looked at me and said, "Okay." Sometimes I am sure this is how the Lord sees us as well and He well knows that we do not always totally understand what may be transpiring in our lives but we just keep on trusting Him because He keeps on loving us and taking care of us.

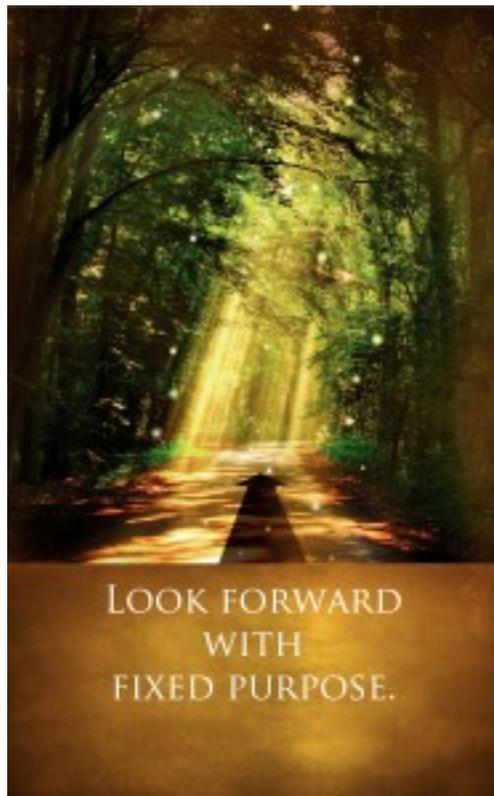
It would do us all good to stop and just learn from the little ones that God has put in our lives. Trust Him through your challenge of change and things you do not clearly understand because He always gives us the promise of hope for our future and the things to come. Blessings to you this day!

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Tuesday, October 1, 2013

"Looking Forward With Purpose"

by Dona Hake



Today I was thinking about how experiences in this life can be stepping stones for us or they can become ruts. Many times when people deal with things that

get in their way they can be consumed with the hindrance. The Lord knew we would encounter such obstacles and I believe with all of my heart that even in the midst of problems He can cause us to attain wisdom from the situation.

Many times our natural reaction to hindrances or upsetting situations is to dwell on them and hang your head low. I just want to encourage you today that you can rise above that thing that may seem impossible to you. Many times in the midst of a problem it all seems so big but God is bigger still!

Proverbs 4:24-25 (VOICE translation)

"Keep your head up, your eyes straight ahead,

and your focus fixed on what is in front of you."

I've said this before but it would be great to share again, rear view mirrors in a car are there for us to glance at not stare at. When you are driving it is good to know what is ahead and what is behind you. If you decide to change lanes you better make sure you are clear all around you or you are going to be the cause of an accident.

Many times we need to glance into our past for it serves as wisdom and a reminder or instruction for the present. Never stare into your past and dwell upon failures though. God desires you keep your head up focused on the good things and the future that He has for you.

Blessings to you!

