

# JESUS

Loves

you

By: Tamar Knochel



Season 2: Book 1:

Acts 1:1-2 Chronicles 28:21



Jesus Loves You: Acts 1:1 - 2 Chronicles 28:21

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# Introduction to 365 Life: Season 2

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In my first season of writing, I have dealt with marital intimacy, struggling through life's situations, the importance of rest in the Lord, the joy and struggle of motherhood, the discovery of truly radical grace, the fascination with the marvelous light of that grace, and the discomfort of transitions. Not too bad for 2 years of blogging, if I say so myself. 10 devotionals plus two journals published equals [Season 1](#).

Today however, marks the beginning of Season 2. We are embarking on a year-long journey through the Word of God together. We call this journey 365 Life. 365: Because it is a journey that takes 365 steps around the calendar. Life: Because those daily steps toward God bring us the abundant life Jesus spoke of in John 10:10. "The thief comes only to steal, kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly."

In [John 6:22-59](#) Jesus tells us that He is the bread of life, the manna from heaven, sent down for us to feast upon and to have a life everlasting. In this passage Jesus, a.k.a the Word ([John 1:1](#)), refers to himself as the bread from heaven, or mana. When we inspect that particular story from [Exodus 16](#), we find some key details for 365 life.

"Behold, I am about to rain bread from heaven for you, and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may test them whether they will walk in my Law or not. On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily." (Ex 16:4-5)

For you- these daily readings are for you. They're not you serving God, they are Him serving you a banquet that brings life! Go out- the Israelites had to get up, put on their shoes and gather the manna. While God is providing the feast, we have to make the choice to indulge in it.

A day's portion every day- just like you eat food daily to stay alive, so too we must feast on the Word of God to stay alive. While there are many different ways to prepare the meal and to eat it, God has brought you to my restaurant where you never really know what shape the manna will take, but you will know it'll be the same amount of reading every day and that you'll walk away full and satisfied from the Scriptures.

**Test them-** in the [Garden of Eden](#) Adam and Eve chose to believe Satan's word over God's. To this very day that is still the test humanity is taking. Whose words will you believe today? By reminding yourself daily of God's words it is so much easier to take every thought captive and toss out the words from the enemy. Life is a test, so let's study like we want to pass!

**The sixth day-** last season I did not get all the way through the Bible. I had a plan. I thought it was great. But it had one huge flaw, me! I had committed to reading and writing all 365 days

of the next year. I failed to take into account my human frailties, my own un-reliability and most of all a day of rest! In describing the manna God said, "when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily." So although we may be reading the same amount of words on the 6th day, it will last us twice as long. The Sabbath principal.

"At evening you shall know that it was the LORD who brought you out of Egypt, and in the morning you shall see the glory of the LORD, because he has heard your grumbling against the LORD."  
Exodus 16:6-7

These are our parameters for the next year.

There will be a new devotional book for each four weeks of reading.

# We Will Never Be Lost

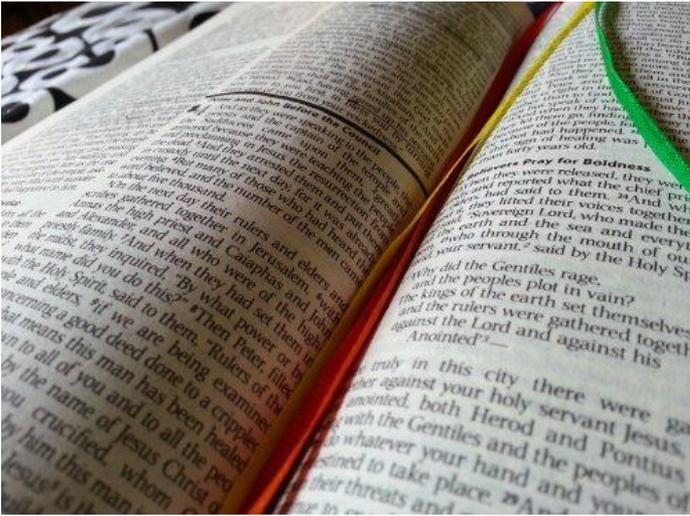
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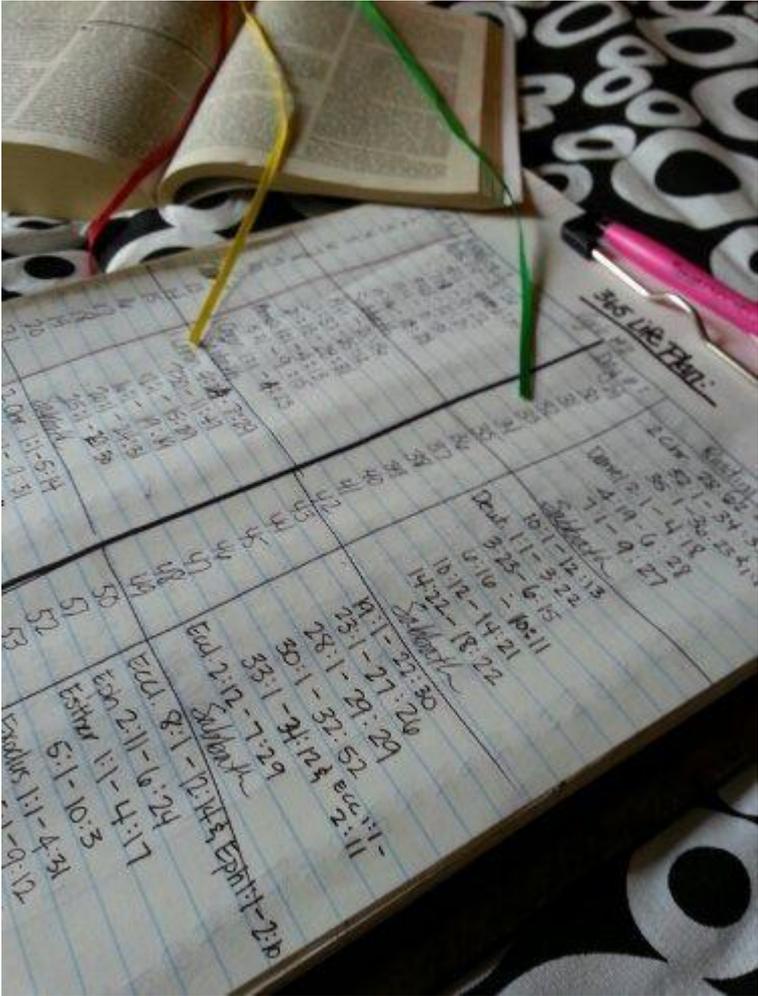
"this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God,"  
(Acts 2:23)

Last night as I was sleeping, without ceremony or fanfare, May died and June was born. A new season of life has begun for me and I could not be more excited. Today is a fresh start, a new beginning, a new trip around the globe. It even rained last night making the world greener and more lush. The birds even seem to be singing with more gusto this morning.

I have spent the last two days flipping through my Bible marking out the landmarks for our year-long journey through the word.



I studied the road map of life and pinpointed our rest-stops and our resting days taking into account breaks in the stories and the need for some day's journeys to be a bit shorter or longer than others in order to reach the best rest-stop possible. Together I believe God and I have marked out a definite reading plan for this next cycle around the Sun.



Now it's up to us to follow it to the best of our abilities.

Yesterday God brought a slinky to my attention. He pointed out to me the shape of the coils, how they circle around a fixed point in a continual upward motion. He pointed out to

me how even when the slinky appears to have no motion, the shape of the slinky itself emits motion.

So many times in life it seems like we're not getting anywhere. It feels like nothing is happening. But that's not true. We are constantly moving. We are always in motion through time and space in eternal clock work around the Earth's axis, the Sun and around the universe. This place we call home is full of circles and cycles that spin us upward toward Home.

With every cycle we are one level closer to Him - even if it doesn't feel like it. In today's reading we find Peter quoting David prophesying about Jesus:

"I saw the Lord always before me, for He is at my right hand that I may not be shaken; therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; my flesh also will dwell in Hope. For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One see corruption. You have made known to me the paths of life; you will make me

full of gladness with your presence."  
(Acts 2:25-28)

In our walk through life, Jesus is ever before us, guiding us in the way we should go through His Holy Spirit. He remains always present through His Spirit, the comforter, so that we will not be shaken by life's trials and tribulations. Because of Jesus no matter what troubles befall us our hearts can be glad our tongues can rejoice because the One who goes before us has overcome this world and cleared a path for us to follow, a Way through which to go. Because of Jesus we can live in Hope and not fear. How can we do this? We remember His promise. For He will not abandon us to Hell or let those of us in Christ see corruption! Now that, my friends, is a promise! It's the truth, a whole truth and nothing but the truth! Jesus has made known this path of life to us, the truth that once we accept His gift of salvation He is faithful to guard and protect our souls from the corruption around us. We have been given an incorruptible life through Christ! There is no

greater gift, there is no better joy than to live *that* life! While our bodies may be wasting away, our souls grow ever stronger, healthier, more lovely with age. The presence of God in our lives makes us glad when we could be sad. He makes us prosper when all around us fails. He strengthens our hearts through this cyclical journey we call life. A cycle where we often find ourselves back in pits we were once pulled out of... But He is with us, teaching us all the while how to avoid falling deeper into those pits. And even how to avoid them altogether by leaning on his power and strength to do so. So. Let's hitch up those wagons and set out on this next leg of our journey through life together. The Bible is our roadmap, His Holy Spirit is our guide, and 365 Life is our travel plan.

**With God as our guide we will never be lost!**

# In This Name

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Word  
of  
the  
Day Acts 4:1-6:15

"In this name" Acts 5:28



I admit that much of today's reading felt like a haze. But through that haze a pattern began to emerge. A name.

The Sadducees were "greatly annoyed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead." Acts 4:2

"let it be known to all of you and all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead by him this man is standing before you well." Acts 4:10

"This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone." Acts 4:11

"And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." Acts 4:12

"But in order that it may spread no farther among the people, let us warn them to speak no more to anyone in this name." Acts 4:17

I could go on and on, but just by this short passage it is evident that there is tremendous power in the name of Jesus of Nazareth! Power that filled the Sadducees with jealous fear and the disciples with power and

boldness through His Holy Spirit. There is power in the name of Jesus because it speaks of the person of Jesus, in whom all power resides. When we have Jesus, we have everything we need. He is the cornerstone the builders rejected. Will you reject him today? Will I? I almost did. But "if this plan or this undertaking is of man, it will fail; but if it is of God, nothing will be able to overthrow it." Acts 5:38-39

As unfaithful as I have already fully proven myself to be, God still won't let me fail. You know why? Because of you. Because He cares about you. And it's my job to remind (myself and) you every day how much He loves you. He loves you enough to send you power and strength through a simple name - JESUS! A name that saves to the fullest and most extreme extent. A name above all names. A name that means everything to me because He gave everything for me while I was yet a sinner. Although I sinned and fell oh so short of the glory of God, He justified me by His grace as a gift through the redemption that

is in Christ Jesus whom God put forward as a propitiation for my sins and yours! (Romans 3:23-25)

Hallelujah! We are justified through Grace!

Thank you Jesus!

# Who Am I Living to Please?

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So, I had a whole other post half-heartedly written in my head and when I started writing it down and it just didn't feel right. I put down my pen, picked up my Bible and said through tears, "LORD, what is Your message for ME today?"

I have spent so much time taking down and delivering messages for other people lately. And right now I'm the one hurting. Much more than I expected I would. My Grandpa just died yesterday and it's hitting me with more force than I expected. Every little thing seems to bring me to tears right now. And the people asking me, "how are you doing?" is annoying me. They may not intend it, but they all seem to be asking me if I'm staying strong and holding it all together. Well, I guess the answer is, "no I'm not". But really, should I be?

Should I be holding the sadness in so that it can swallow me whole later? Should I stay strong so that others aren't made uncomfortable?

For so long I've lived my life for others, for their pleasure and satisfaction. Why? What good does that do me? And even though I've tried living for Christ (in the way others told me I should) that didn't seem to ever work out either. So I wonder if perhaps I should start living for me instead. Start living to please His Holy Spirit inside me so that when I stand in heaven and look back on my life I can say I loved me. So that I can say I loved seeing Him in me coming out in ways I never expected or could have hoped. This morning when I asked God what His message for ME was today He pointed to Acts 7:20 "Beautiful in God's sight". Today, right now, when I'm trying so hard to write and be faithful and do His will. Right now when I'm stinky and frumpy with my trusty Purdue sweatshirt from college, yoga pants, crazy hair, no makeup and even un-

brushed teeth. Right now when I'm broken to bits and hurting and weeping constantly. That's when I am truly beautiful in His sight. When I'm leaning on Him with everything I have because I recognize how weak I really am, how desperately I need His help because I simply can't do this on my own. That is when I'm the most beautiful to Him.



(He made me take and post this picture)

Ok, I shared mine, what was your personal message from God through His Word today? If you're brave enough, take a picture of your beautiful self and share it with us!



# Beautiful YOU

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Yesterday I posted a picture of my disheveled little self and challenged you to share pictures of your beautiful selves with me. ([TamarKnochel@gmail.com](mailto:TamarKnochel@gmail.com) - let me know if I can share them, I won't unless I have permission.) When the first one came in I was so struck by the Spirit at how beautiful He feels we are. And then He started singing:

"You are so beautiful, to Me.

Can't you see?

You're everything I hoped for,

You're everything I need.

You are so beautiful, to Me!"

He wasn't just singing to me in my brokenness or even to the beauty whose picture I was beholding, it was, no IS, His song to all of us.

To YOU personally. In today's scripture God told Peter, "What God has made clean, do not call common." Acts 10:15

In the early days of the Bible God pulled Abram aside and told him he was special, that God wanted to make a holy nation through Abram. And Abram believed Him. That very nation grew rapidly and became more numerous than the sand at the sea or the stars in the sky. When Christ died on the cross He died for ALL mankind. His blood cleanses EVERY heart that believes; which brings them into the family of God.

God has made you clean. He has declared you as holy and set apart for His good purposes, don't you dare consider yourself common! You have the blood of JESUS covering your nakedness, cleansing your wounded-ness, filling in your imperfections, declaring you pure, righteous and beautiful in His sight. And there is NOTHING common or ordinary about that!

You are so beautiful to Him. Receive this gift of Truth from Him today.

# Letter from God

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Beloved,

I can't fit in a box and neither can you. You have to be who I made you to be or you'll never be happy with yourself. You've got to do what I made you to do. Say what I made you to say. Look the way I made you to look. Live the way I made you to live. Act the way I made you to act. I made you to be you, a unique and special individual unlike anyone else in all of creation, why would you want to be just like someone else? Just be yourself, it's who I made you to be. And I think you're pretty spectacular if I do say so myself! ;) I love you. The you I made you to be. Stop trying to copy other people, it's not worth your time and effort, because no matter how hard you try, you can't be them and they can't be you. My world doesn't work that way. It only works if you be you and let

them be them. They're a foot and you're an eye. They can't see and you can't walk so get over it and move on to do the function I created you to perform. Be an "I", the most beautiful "I" you can be, the "I", I made you to be. You'll never be sorry you did.

Love ALWAYS,

God

# Closed Doors Opened

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"About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God and the prisoners were listening to them, and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken. And immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's bonds were unfastened." Acts 16:25-26

Many of us are in different spiritual prisons. Sometimes more than one at a time! However, that is where I pray this blog comes into play. When I write I usually write from or about a prison I've been in whether Fear, or Doubt, Uncertainty, Condemnation, Complacency, Confusion, you name it! And I pray that my prayers and "songs" shake the foundations of your prisons!

If we look at this scripture we find what happens when foundations are shaken; doors open and bonds are unfastened! That's the power of the Word of God!

Earlier in Acts 16 we find Paul, Silas and Timothy facing closed door (verse 6: Asia) after closed door (verse 7: Bithynia). I can only imagine how frustrated they were at this. Here the Spirit of God has empowered them with boldness and a passion to spread the gospel but He keeps telling them, "not here".

I've been in that hallway of locked doors with God before and it's frustrating and discouraging as you knock on door after door and they simply remain closed to you. So you walk farther down the hall and knock on more doors and they stay closed causing more feelings of rejection and disappointment and doubt of your calling. But these doors are not a rejection of you nor are they a confirmation of your doubts; they're arrows pointing you in the direction God wants you to

go. They're like those signs in the bank when a teller window is closed, "next teller please".

God, please infuse us with the patience of Your Spirit as we continue down our hall of closed doors in search of the door of opportunity that was made just for us. Heal our knuckles that have been bruised and bloodied from knocking. There are so many hurts that accompany closed doors; we give those hurts to You our great and mighty healer. Lord, we give You our prison-stays. And we will praise Your name in every circumstance that shakes us because we know that we have been given an unshakable kingdom ([Hebrews 12:18-29](#)) where Christ is our unbreakable foundation. We pray that we may be deeply rooted and grounded in Your love for us and that we may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that we may be FILLED with ALL the fullness of God. (Ephesians 3:17-19)



# Sabbath

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NO  
READING  
TODAY!



# Wake Up!

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"Be alert" Acts 20:27

Yesterday, as I was driving home from the vet's office with the kids and dog in the backseat I had a strange thought run through my head, "Since you're such an important person in the kingdom of God you should drive your car off the road into that tree and prove it." Now, at the time I was driving at no slow speed so of COURSE the thought frightened me and I immediately pushed it aside. So while I didn't obey it, I didn't stop to think where a thought like that could be coming from either. I simply pushed it out of my mind and kept driving. And I didn't think about it again until this morning at 3:22am when I woke up from a dream with a start. I can't remember any of the dream except driving my car off the road into a tree!

Now while some may say a dream like that is straight from the devil I will strongly disagree with them, because that dream woke me up! It alerted me to the demonic activity that had been so surrounding me during the day that I had ceased to realize their efforts to destroy me. I had failed to remain alert to their ploys. I had not been taking EVERY thought CAPTIVE.

"For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ, being ready to punish every disobedience, when your obedience is complete." 2 Corinthians 10:3-6

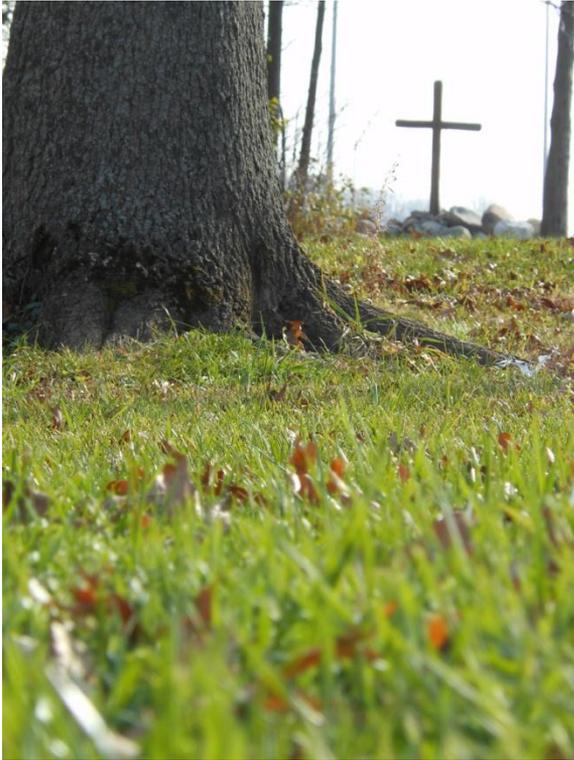
You see, those thoughts of running my car into a tree, they weren't my thoughts. Yet I was still allowing them to tromp their way

through my head instead of capturing them and punishing them for invading my space. Our minds are the battlefield of spiritual warfare because as a man thinks, so he is. And out of the overflow of his heart a man speaks, ([Matthew 12:34](#), [Luke 6:45](#)) and those words contain the power of life and death ([James 3](#)) to all who hear them including the speaker.

When I awoke from my dream I simultaneously awoke from my spiritual slumber as well. I had been renting out space in my head to the Liar himself and it was high-time I kicked him out! So right then and there I opened my mouth and spoke, "Spirit of Suicide, in Jesus' name, report to Jesus immediately for sentencing." On and on I went, Self-harm, Self-destruction, Indifference, Lack, Depression, Fear, Self-reliance... capturing them by the ear by calling out their name and punishing them the best way I know how. I sent them to The Judge for eternal punishment. For an HOUR I lay in bed quietly and calmly calling out the names of my former tormentors, telling them where to go and then asking the Holy Spirit to come

and fill the space they had occupied with His beautiful fruity self: "Come Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Goodness, Gentleness, Kindness, Faithfulness and Self-Control!" I praised God for opening my eyes to the bonds that had been hindering me from fully praising Him and fully appreciating His love for me.

In that very car on the way TO the vet's office I had been sobbing for God to help me, to free me from this unknown and un-named prison I seemed to be in. A prison I knew I couldn't get out of on my own. Right then the scale tipped back toward my favor and the Enemy knew he had been defeated because I had run into THE tree!



THANK YOU JESUS!

I feel like a completely different person today without all those "cling-ons"!

HALLELUJAH!

See what just one short week of daily Bible reading can do for you!?! I certainly have missed it! Oh my friends, the best is yet to come, won't you join me!?!



# Take a Break

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Word  
of the Day [Acts 21:37-25:12](#)



TRUST in the LORD with all your heart and lean not in your own understanding!

"What shall I do LORD?" Acts 22:10

Is that not the question of the century or what! What's shall I do Lord? For many of us true rest and stillness is a very difficult concept to master. For me, it is because I

love feeling productive. I love the feeling of having accomplished something, or better yet many things. It makes me feel useful, valuable... important. If I'm not DOING something i feel less valuable.

Did I seriously just say that? Just looking at that sentence make me shake my head! How! How in the world can my physical activity affect my value? I mean, if a car isn't driving me somewhere does that decrease it's a value or ability to do so later? No. Actually, most cars are worth more if they haven't been driven extensively and essentially worn out. Or my children. If they're sitting and watching TV or sleeping rather than cleaning does that make them less valuable to me? What about my coffee maker? It's job is to make coffee when I want it. I did does just that. So during those times when it's not making coffee does it lose its value? Nope. So where in the world do we get the idea that if we're taking a break of any length that we lose our value? Or that we're not useful? If my coffee maker is not being used at the moment does that mean it has ceased to be a useful tool for my kitchen? If my car isn't being driven at the moment has it ceased from being a

useful way for me to get to the grocery store? Oh! Or what if it even ran out of gas which is totally happened! Has it ceased to be useful to me? By no means! Was it the car's fault it ran out of gas, or mine? Why do we feel so guilty about running out of gas physically or spiritually or emotionally? Why is it so hard to allow ourselves to be humans in need of a break? Why do we refuse to rest? Why do neglect to fill up our gas tanks or our water reservoir and then get angry when they run out and we're forced to stop our movement and take a break and pray?

Prayer is our fuel and time in the word is our living water. The Lord is my strength, an **ever** present help in times of trouble.



# “Shipwrecked” with Guest Writer Mark Trietsch

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*Good morning all! So yesterday I finished the post, Take a Break! And then headed off to church and lo and behold wouldn't you know it that the message God had waiting there for me to receive was that I should...take a break! Imagine that! LOL. So, just as THE doctor has directed I am taking this week off from posting. I will still be reading all the readings and writing about them, just none of you will ever get to see them. Instead, we will all be blessed to receive offerings from several friends of mine that have so graciously agreed to submit a story, or picture or video, whatever God leads them to share with us.*

*So without further ado, I present to you today's guest writer, Mark Trietsch! Let's give him a warm welcome.*

*\*round of thunderous applause\**

At our church Sunday, we had a very interesting guest speaker. His name is Douglas Carmel, (I hope I have his last name spelled correctly), and he is a Christ believing Jew. We have been studying the Passion of the Christ in my Sunday school class of middle-schoolers. So, I had Doug come in to speak to the class, as clearly, he would have more knowledge of Jewish history than I would.

One of the topics I asked Doug to address was the Roman-Jewish relationship. It struck me, the dynamic that presents itself so clearly, in both the case of Jesus and why Paul was sent to Agrippa. Doug explained to the class that the Romans didn't really have a problem with Christianity, at least early on. They didn't have a problem, because they didn't really care. As explained by Doug, the Romans had their own gods, the gods of Olympus, so another religion wasn't a huge concern for them. They were more interested in taxes. Worship anything you

want, just keep the tax money rolling in. Sounds a lot like our government today, but that is another story.

The similarity in both cases is uncanny. The Jewish leaders, who knew the Old Testament, and therefore should have recognized the truth in the ministries of Jesus and Paul wanted them to be shut up by any means possible. This meant appealing to the very Romans, which they themselves hated, to do the dirty work for them. Meanwhile, the Romans, who knew little to nothing about Moses and the prophets, in both cases found the accused guilty of nothing.

Makes me think about how often times it is the people who should know better that are the hardest to reach with the Gospel. People who perhaps went to church as a child, attended vacation Bible school and heard all the stories, yet that is all they are to them, stories, People who can recite the Christmas story front to back, sing about the Silent Night but deny the very words they are

singing. They may be the very definition of a "good person", but ultimately they refuse to live for Jesus. They have head knowledge, but not heart knowledge. I marvel at the stories and testimonies of the drug addict or the alcoholic, with very little going for them, that they will receive the message of Christ openly, while the "normal" person shuts out the truth.

The other main thought I had while reading these chapters was that Paul never lost sight of his goal, his mission. Whether standing before a Roman ruler or an island dweller, Paul continued to present the Gospel message. He never let his circumstances change his mission.

It makes me cringe to think how often I let my daily surroundings determine my mood. If things are going bad at work, does that give me a valid reason to blow up, lose my cool, and act like a loon? Sitting in my living room, the answer is a very clear "of course not". Yet how often do we let small things take us

away from our ultimate mission. How many times do we let work situations, or the behavior of our kids, determine whether we publically show Christ's love to others today? Or, will we get mad at our temporary hardship and focus on our need, and how we are being "cheated"? Through chains, prison, house arrest and shipwrecks, Paul saw every situation not as reason to throw up his hands and quit, but as a new stage to present the Word of God. Paul looked to make the best of every situation and circumstance.

Makes one want to lower their heads a little. Most likely we will never find ourselves lost at sea, or shipwrecked, or stand in chains before those which could kill us. Yet we can almost look for reasons not to be a witness for Jesus, to decide to "turn it off" if we feel like it. May we strive to be more like Paul, to see the opportunity in whatever God presents us with and to carry our witness for Him wherever we find ourselves.



# “The Lion has Roared” with Guest Writer Jennifer Adams

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Today's guest writer is my dear friend Jennifer Adams!

\*Thunderous applause\*

If you would like to learn more about Jennifer and her children's book (For I AM Always With You: Valerie's True Fairy Tale) [click here to visit her website](#). I HIGHLY recommend it! And now without further ado, I'll hand the keyboard over to Jennifer!

"Before the Lord God does anything, He tells His servants the prophets. The Lion has roared! Who wouldn't be

afraid? The Lord God has spoken, and I must prophesy." ~Amos 3:7&8

To be a prophet of God is an awesome responsibility, because you are appointed by God himself. It is a divine honor, but it is also a burden, as identified in Amos' name which means "burden bearer".

As for an Old Testament prophet, his name did carry its full weight. He was given the "burden" to declare to Israel the wrath that they were about to receive from God for all their sin and transgressions. Therefore, when we hear the word burden, it takes on a negative connotation.

Through the message God gave to Amos, the Lord was showing Himself as the one attacking Israel, rather than

protecting her. Up to this point, He was her shepherd, but three transgressions plus one more equals destruction. Amos listed the sin of Israel's enemies, then the sins of her allies, and then finally Israel's list was adding all the sins to herself. God was accusing Israel to be the worst of all the nations. Why would God say this?

Because Israel was the apple of His eye, therefore her disobedience hurt Him the most. " ...to whom much has been given, much will be required." ~Luke 12:48 God had given the Hebrews the law. They knew that their actions were defiant of the one true God. If only His people would repent. God knew that He could no longer forgive the inequities; His only choice was judgment. He made it clear to them that only a

few would be snatched from the Lion's mouth. God did not want them to mistake His anger as an idle threat.

As human nature would have it, it takes a Lion's roar to gain our attention. Most of us need to become afraid to reach out for a savior. I believe that is what God has done here. He became the Lion so that he could send the Lamb. He knew that His children would never be able to uphold the law, but rather, He shed the blood of His son to cover all iniquity. Now when Jesus invites us to take His yoke, the burden has been redeemed.

Paul writes to the Galatians, that every man shall bear his own burden, expressing to the individual that each one of us has a specific task that God has assigned only to them.

This is impelling to me! I am awe struck with the knowledge that the Creator of the universe thought of me and what He wants me to be before I was ever born. Not only that, but HE has the confidence in ME to fulfill that purpose to help complete His kingdom. That right there should compel every one of us to fall on our faces and declare to Him we are truly humbled and willing to do anything that He ordains of us.

I admit, I was once afraid that I would be unable to do what He expected. I was like most of us who are scared that He may demand too much, or He may require something that I was not willing to do. However, Jesus reassures us that His burden is light. ~Matthew 11:30

He is not going to ask us to do anything that He has not equipped us to do. But you ask, how does He equip us? Jesus Christ dwells in those who have been baptized by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, it is His strength, His abilities that allow us to do what He asks. He is doing the work, yet He allows us to share in the glory! In the Old Testament, the prophets were called servants. With the New Testament Covenant, Jesus has called us friends. We each have the opportunity to be a prophet for the King of the Universe... Will you answer the Roar?

# “Is That a Siren?” with Guest Writer Dalalah Hepburn

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I am so pleased as punch to introduce today's guest writer, my friend and fellow blogger, Dalalah Hepburn. [Click here](#) if you would like to visit her "Transparenme" blog or here if you would like to visit her "Not so Empty Nest" blog.

Let's give a warm welcome to Dalalah, she fought all day long for this message!

*\*thunderous round of applause\**

Yesterday was very eventful for me! I worked a full day at my new job, my son (20 yrs old) picked me up from work (how crazy is that!) and we had one of the few warm and muggy days on the day of a church block party! Woo! But none of those was

even the beginning of the highlight of my night! That came when I entered a small tent with a woman already sitting there. She was another prayer warrior who had volunteered to pray at this event. We met, we had small talk and before we could even pray over our time there, the mad dash was on. We immediately had someone come over for prayer and that is where God began to put the missing pieces of my past and everything I had been through in perspective.

The first lady had a 16 yr old daughter/granddaughter. I'm doing time with my 16 yr old daughter and all her friends, attitude, rebellion, disrespect, disregard for others, etc. I'm sure some of you can relate to these so called friends I speak of.

As the night went on, I met pieces of me at different times of my life and prayed fervent and warring prayers over these women. Even at the end, I prayed over my new friend, who apparently knew my mom, and her need of healing. I came home semi

exhausted but nothing prepared me for what was next.

I woke up the next morning after what appeared to be a long restless sleep (I don't remember) and felt like a MACK TRUCK had not just ran over me but backed up two or three times to make sure the job was done!! It was only then and through crying out and prayer that I realized exactly what is in this text. We are at war and God is sounding the alarm.

In the beginning chapter, 5, what drew me in was the text, "seek me and live," at the end of verse 4 and then at the beginning of verse 6 again, "seek the LORD, and live...". Throughout these chapters that's what I kept seeing. That's what I keep hearing. That's what God keeps on saying to us. How simple is that? "Seek me and live." No jumping through hoops, no endless working, no sweat and blood to give, just seeking Him.

The other thing God drew my attention to is the alarm that was sounded. All through the

text, its like God was saying, "Okay, y'all are not doing as I said. You better get it together because I don't want to do this but I will to get my glory." It's interesting how the times have not really changed. We still have our idols, our false worship, our watered down sermons, our... okay I'm done. What I hear in this text is YOU HAVE FORGOTTEN YOUR FIRST LOVE!!! How soon we forget that we serve a Sovereign God just as much as we serve a jealous One. And at the end of the 9th chapter, haha!

Have you ever had your child act a plum fool in the store? I mean the crying and screaming, the fit on the floor and tearing down things and kicking as if you were a kidnapper trying to abduct this very violent little person? And all the way through the store and to the car you just keep saying, "Oh you are in for it!! Just wait until we get to that car! I am gonna wear your butt out!" And then you get to the car with a much quieter child only to realize that your baby, the one who just morphed into a creature from far

away, is smiling and hugging you. They're calm. That's God with us. At the end of this text, I love this, He simply says, " 'I will restore the fortunes of my people Israel, and they shall rebuild the ruined cities and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and drink their wine, and they shall make gardens and eat their fruit. I will plant them on their land, and they shall never again be uprooted out of the land that I have given them,' says the LORD your God."

While He has every right, all the power to discipline us and would if necessary, what He desires is to commune with us and bless us. What a mighty God we serve!!



# Chocolate Dream

From Season 1

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Word  
of  
the  
Day [1 Chronicles 1:1-4:23](#)

And the king made silver and gold as common in Jerusalem as stone, and he made cedar as plentiful as the sycamore of the Shephelah. 2 Chronicles 1:15

I had a dream this morning that I just have to share with you! I got up and read my scriptures for today and got done a little bit early. Sean was still doing his workout for the morning so I went back into the bedroom and laid back down, less because I was tired and more because I was freezing! But I immediately fell asleep and had this dream:

My Mom took my son and I to go visit my husband at work for lunch. We ate in a little café after eating we wanted to get a desert from the bakery case, but we only had enough money to buy one thing for us to

share. It was a chocolate chip cookie dipped in the most decadent luxurious chocolate I've ever tasted. You know, one of those chocolates that you bite into it and when it hits your tongue your eyes roll into the back of your head and a moan of pleasure escapes your lips embarrassingly, yeah, it was one of those kinds of chocolates and was gone in seconds. I looked down and I had it all over my fingers and everything, but before licking them off I asked the young girl behind the counter if they sold any of the chocolate by itself. I wasn't planning on buying any of it right then, I didn't have any money left for it, but for the next time we came I wanted to be prepared to buy as much of it as I could so I could make something with it myself. Well the girl looked around to see if anyone was looking and then whispered to me secretively "give me a minute" and then turned to the shelf behind her that was filled with every kind of chocolately treat you could possibly imagine. And she started taking one of everything down off the shelf and putting it

in a pile to take with us!!!! I turned to look for my Mom to see if she was seeing what was happening and she was nowhere in sight. When I turned back around there was a pile of succulent chocolate treats so large that there was no way that all three of us could come close to carrying it out to the car with us. So I asked the girl behind the counter if she had a bag!

Then I woke up briefly when my husband came in the room, but immediately went back to sleep. Before I fell back to sleep I was praying "Lord, can You really be that good?" I knew what that dream had meant, that God is preparing to bless us with more abundance than we'll be able to carry by ourselves. And it won't just be any old abundance, it will be the BEST abundance, the kind that makes you just roll your eyes back in your head and moan embarrassingly it will be so good. But that kind of abundance isn't familiar to me, so honestly, it's really hard for me to believe that God will do that for me and my family. I have lived on the verge of poverty my entire

life, I don't know what abundance like that looks like, except when it's for other people. But not for me. So it's really hard for me to understand why God would choose to bless me with that. So when I was praying "Lord, can You really be that good?" in my heart it was really "Lord, can You really be that good to ME?" And I prayed that over and over and over and over until I suddenly found myself asleep and dreaming again. Only this time:

I was laying in the top bed of a bunk bed with both my children in the bottom bunk and my husband lying beside me. And while the words of my prayer were repeating through my brain like they do in a dramatic moment of a movie my husband leaned over me and wrapped one arm around my waist to pull me closer to him. And as another "Lord, can You really be that good?" resounded through my brain He whispered into my ear "Yes I can." And at that exact moment a bright red cardinal swooped down in front of me and landed on a tree branch nearby. And then the dream repeated itself a second time "Lord,

can You really be that good?", hug, whisper, "Yes I can", cardinal swooped down and then it stared at me with this look on its face like "believe it already woman"! And then I woke up again.

The fact that the dream repeated itself twice means that it is SET. It is certain. It is God's plan and it will happen. God IS that good. It's still hard for me to believe that He is that good to me, I certainly have done nothing to deserve it, but the way in which He held me and said "Yes I can" I know that He can and that He will. And to be honest it almost terrifies me a little bit. I've lived in these bonds of financial slavery for as long as I can remember, I don't know anything different and that makes it a little scary for me. But I refuse to be afraid! Because I know that God is with me and He is for me, and if He is for me then WHO can be against me... including me and my irrational fears. I don't know what to do with abundance, but I'm great with living in lack. I know what to do, I know how to act, I know this place I've lived in for so long. I've

learned how to be content with what I have and I didn't even ask for abundance, other than an abundance of the LORD in my life, because that I could never have enough of! God and I have been through some really tough spots in life together, I couldn't live without Him in my life. I only want Him. Without Him nothing else on this rock means anything.

In the verse today, King Solomon's reign was one of such wealth and abundant prosperity that silver and gold were as common as stone. Can you even begin to imagine wealth like that? And not just for the king himself, it was in all of Jerusalem! All the people were that wealthy! What would that be like? I read that verse before I had these dreams! Because, honestly, God knows that chocolate is a bigger deal to me than silver and gold are. But seriously, in that dream there wasn't a single healthy food item in the lot! It was cakes and cookies, candies, truffles, bon bons, chocolate cinnamon rolls, if it was yummy and sweet it was in that pile and then some! I might as well have been in a chocolate Shoppe in heaven,

and for all I know I might have been! Because that was chocolate like I've never tasted in my life! It was real and pure, divine.

Hmmmmmm.... now that's a thought! Everything here on earth is but a shadow or a pattern of the things of heaven... if chocolate is this good here... sigh... Oh that Marriage Supper of the Lamb is going to be a feast to remember friends!!!! Just thinking about it is making me hungry already! Oh my friends, that I might dance in the streets of heaven with you now! What a day that will be! But alas, we have work to do here first. And we will be strong and do it fervently unto the Lord because He is worthy of our praise and our honor. My dear friends let us hold out our hands to receive the abundance that God so desperately wants to pour out over us. Let us keep our hope firmly placed in Him and His goodness; and not on the things of this earth that pass away so quickly and never satisfy. Let us run with endurance toward the goal that Our Father has set before us, His loving arms held open wide waiting to receive us into

His presence every morning through His word. He loves us so. Let us accept that love with open hearts and open minds. Let us search for that love with open eyes and listen for that love with open ears. Let us run toward that love, His unending love with feet that will not grow weary or faint, but will mount up on wings like eagles and soar toward our heavenly reward that IS waiting for us. Every day that we endure here in the valley of the shadow of death is nothing compared to the thousands of days that we will rejoice in and praise His holy name in when we finally get home and see Him face to face. His loving arms will wrap around us and He will whisper in our ears, "See, I told you I could be that good. I told you that you would see My goodness in the land of the living. My righteous ones are never forsaken and their children are never begging for bread."

Yes my friends, I believe He can be that good and that He IS that good. Oh if only we would receive that today! If only we would open ourselves up to His goodness today! If only we

would open all the doors of our soul like windows in a house and allow His goodness to blow in like a fresh spring breeze and then cling to that goodness throughout the day when the Enemy tries to snatch it away from us and keep us from believing that He is that good. If only we could believe Him, and not just in Him. If only we could cling to Him the way He clings to us, fervently and without hesitation. Lord help us do that! Help us to believe in Your goodness, HERE, NOW in the land of the living. Help us to receive you today and every day. Help us to open ourselves up to You and all Your goodness, today! Help us to cling to You and to shove the Enemy out the door when he comes knockin' trying to bust his way into our consciousness. Father help us in our helplessness. Help us in our disbelief. Help us in our frailties and use them to allow Your ability, Your faith and Your strength to shine through us. Use us, not because we are worthy or able but simply because we are willing to be used of You. Father thank You for allowing us to be a part of Your world.

Thank You for insisting on loving us even when we push You farther away from ourselves. Thank You for calling us to draw nearer to You and allowing us to enter Your gates with thanksgiving and Your courts with praise. Instead of throwing us out where we deserve to be; where there is crying and gnashing of teeth. You call us in to your throne room and pull us up onto Your lap where we can snuggle nearer to Your heart. Thank You Lord.

Sing: [Big House](#) by Audio Adrenaline

# Sabbath

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NO  
READING  
TODAY!



# “Family Affair” with Guest Writer Dalaiah Hepburn

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Dalaiah Hepburn is back with us today! Yay! I am so excited to share her writing with you! Plus, this time she brought me cupcakes mmmmmm..... Those I won't be sharing with you. 😊 If you would like to visit her [TransparenMe blog click here](#). Or her other blog, [Not so Empty Nest Days, click here](#). Dalaiah thank you so much for coming back today. Let's all give her a nice round of applause as she takes the stage.

*\*Thunderous Round of Applause\**

I have a big enough family, both on my mom's side and my dad's. for whatever reason, I know my dad's side more than I do my mom's. I also notice something about my dad's family. As far as I can tell, they are into children's work. I don't know how far back it goes or

when this legacy started but its there and my brother, myself and even my kids are showing this trait of desire to work with or for kids, from teacher all the way to advocate. Just like in this genealogy, I'm sure we have some kin we love to be around, some we don't. Some we flock to, some we duck from and then there are the ones no one can remember how they are kin to us! Jabez, earlier in the text (v9-10), was one of the family members we would have asked as we saw him walking in the room or backyard, "now how is he related? I see his mama, but who is his daddy?" The other thing we would have noticed about him is that he, "more honorable than his brothers." But he didn't notice it. How many times has someone told you how gifted you are in an area and you thank them, though not believing it because of the torment you lived with in another area of life. Ouch!!

This is really a part of the Bible I struggle with. Can I say that out loud and still be looked at the same? I skim the genealogies not so

much because I don't care, but because all I see is and this one begat this one, this one begat this one, this one, this one and two others by his helpmaid. It's just not as active as Judges 15:4-16!! Now Sampson read like an action packed movie!! But because it is in God's Word, it's important. That's when it began to hit me, quite recently actually. Like right as I was writing this, what's in the genealogy of Jacob's sons is family and how different they are yet still blood.

We are actually able to see what Jacob had spoken over his sons and grandsons come forth. In the latter part of chapter 4, we see the family lining up and starting their own family trees, some of great worth, some not so great yet not counted out. In chapter 5, speaks of Reuben's lineage and how sin can cast you out of the place of honor you were once in (his birthright was as firstborn) but not out all together. We also see others lineage as faithful, as small, as disobedient. In chapter 6, we literally see the birth of the Levites. We see the birth of Aaron, Miriam

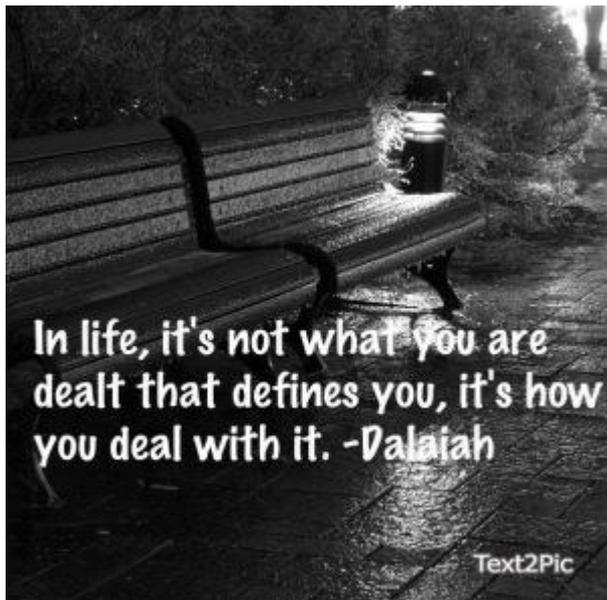
and Moses (in that order) and the understanding of their portion being the LORD. These were those set apart for Him. Chapter 7 gives no explanation of the omitting of Zebulun and Dan but they are visibly absent. This chapter ends speaking of where Joseph's sons are.... and the saga continues right up to Jesus!

Whew!! What I pulled out of that is that we all have families we don't get to choose. Some good, some bad and some.... yeah pray for those ones! But in our lineage, they were family before we knew it. And they left a legacy for us. Our forefathers and patriarchs, or matriarchs in some families, paved the way for a path. What I love about Christ is that when you surrender, this is no longer your path! When the path is filled with addictions, so on and so forth, our life in Christ is what now defines us! On the flip side, there are some whose lineage is success, fame, power, blah blah blah and when they surrender He may call them out of that! Only he knows what your path is in your Jesus

journey! Your family cannot make or break you. The biggest thing I pulled away was that this was all BEFORE Christ! These folks had family lines they had to walk out due to the prophetic speaking of Jacob and his "blessings." Our families don't have to be that way!

My family is marked with all sorts of generational curses, but once I surrendered, Jesus' blood covered me and I broke those with His authority! I now speak life and cancel every assignment made by the enemy for my kids! But it doesn't stop there. Just speaking it isn't enough! We must walk it out, no matter what!

Have you had a sordid, rough past? That doesn't make you who you are, HE does! I leave you with this saying that God gave me as I did devotion one day, blessings!



In life, it's not what you are  
dealt that defines you, it's how  
you deal with it. -Dalaijah

Text2Pic

# “Back Burner” with Guest Writer Beth Lively

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1 Chronicles 7:30-11:47

Mmmmmmm... my Spirit feels nice and filled after this week of feasting on the Word of God prepared by my Beloved friends! I am so amazingly blessed to call you all "friend". You have no idea how much you all mean to me. Thank you all from the bottom-most place in my heart! We all are eternally grateful for your willingness to contribute to our cause. I pray that God will bless you more tremendously than you ever thought possible! And if you ever wish to come back and share the stage here you are more than welcome!

Today's guest is an artist extraordinaire! She can sing, she can play guitar, she can draw and paint and makes jewelery. She writes poetry and stories too, so I had no idea what to expect from her offering today. She

decided to go with a devotional for us. And after having read it I am positive that you will all love it! (I know I do! Maybe because her message is so similar to mine and therefore quite close to my heart. A DAILY walk with God.) Anyway, I digress, so without further ado, I give you my friend Beth Lively!

\*Thunderous round of applause\* You know, because this place is ROCKIN! (Can you tell I'm feelin' frisky today?)

*Philippians: 4:6 Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need and thank Him for all He has done.*

God intended our lives to be like children at play-happily completing the tasks of our days, our hearts filled with wonder and joy, as we relish the company of loved ones, friends, and coworkers; working hard, satisfied in our labor, comfortable in our careers; fulfilled in our families, our heritage . . . but, often enough . . . we don't, we aren't, we are not.

We are guilty of worry; we waste time, sleep, and peace of mind, even to the point of endangering our mental health. We run our minds over worries like gerbils on a metal wheel-over and around, over and around-essentially, stubbornly, attempting to solve this weary world's troubles and challenges all by ourselves. The temptations and tragedies of this world corrupt us as we struggle through the evil imposed by our complicated civilization.

Truly, though, we do not have to be tainted by any of it-*not any of it*. By simply, literally, placing God firmly in front, our vision of the world (and ultimately our reaction to it) will change.

Getting closer to God is something we can fix . . . and that will fix everything else! Keeping God close is easy, but initially takes practice until keeping a prayer, (a running conversation) with God on the back burner of our minds, becomes a hot mug of love, goodness, joy, and hope, ready at hand in our souls, as we meet the challenges and joys of each day.

Devotionals, Stephen's Ministers, Pastoral Counseling, Bible study, Disciple classes, Christian music, radio talk shows, and phone apps. can help create the habit, and once firmly fixed in our daily routine, (and I do mean *daily*, because this wicked world is loud, enticing, harsh, discouraging, and can eat up our strength so fast and cunningly we are drowning in negativity before we even realize), will carry us safely above the currents of distress.

Salvation isn't only about dying and meeting God in Heaven; Jesus saved us *here*, too-saved us from daily troubles and worries-when He showed us beyond doubt that *nothing* can separate us from the love (joy) and protection (worry free) of God.

So . . . go fly a kite, catch a fish, jump in a pool, roast a marshmallow for a so' more, then laugh until your eyes tear up and your tummy hurts . . . and pray for God to take care of the rest!

# Temporary Afflictions=Permanent Reward

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Oh my goodness how I have missed you my friends! It was a very interesting week, was it not? I think we had more technical glitches last week than ever before. There were several points where I said, "It would be so much easier if I were just posting myself." But that's not what God told me to do. He said to have other's post for me." And so while it was more work, I did it anyway.

At the beginning of this week "off" God posed me with a decision. "You choose. Neither answer is wrong. It's your life; do you want to be a hobby writer or a career writer?" I chose, "Career writer". "Then you need to start acting like one." And for the next hour we went over schedule and borders

(crossable and un-crossable). The first and firmest rule was that I had to treat it like a "real job" with office hours, open phone hours and specified times to work on the computer at my desk. But then came the tricky part. Helping those around me see it as a "real job" too. Because it is. My friends aren't used to me having a schedule where I am unavailable to their phone calls. They're used to me being able to sit for HOURS and talk. But if this writing thing is a career then I can't do that like I used to. Because if I want to make money doing this (and I believe I can) then I've got to do it. God didn't put this talent in this body for no reason. I've seen too many lives transformed from this pink pen of Grace to slack back and make it a hobby. Plus, honestly, while it would've been OK with God if I had chosen writing as a hobby, I think Satan would have been thrilled! This influenced me greatly in my decision.



Satan hates people reading in their Bibles because that's where they meet Jesus. \*Whispered aside\* Satan doesn't like Jesus very much. But more than that, Satan really hates when people have someone to explain that Bible to them. ([Acts 8:26-40](#)) He hates when people open themselves up to the Word of God to transform them and make them more like Christ. (Because remember, he hates Christ.) So when someone as bull-headed as me makes up her mind to help people understand the Word of God and bring them

closer to God through something as simple as a blog and books. Well, Satan gets downright pissed off. And boy did I see that this week too! But honestly, it didn't matter to me. You know why? Because I had made a choice to step into Enemy territory and fight a winning battle for as many souls as God will allow me.

The deepest desire of my heart is for YOU to know the love of Christ. I want you to experience how deep and wide, high and long His love for you is. I want you to experience your heart burning with the fire of His presence. I want you to experience the depth of complete transformation that is only possible through the knowledge of the Grace of God. I want you to know what it's like to hold the hand of the man who can do all things and has promised to never leave you.

Yes. It's hard to do the will of God sometimes. But it's worth every second of fighting and hardship. Just imagine meeting someone in heaven you never met on earth and having them embrace you with a hug of gratitude

because you unknowingly endured that hardship for the purpose of their salvation. They will stand there in heaven because you sacrificed just a little bit on earth. Wouldn't that make it all worth it?

"So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light and momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient (temporary), but the things that are unseen are eternal (permanent)." 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

Yes, it is an affliction. Yes, it is hard and a huge pain. But is the pain permanent? Will it last forever?

No.

Does that pain have a purpose?

Yes!

What is that purpose?

It is to "prepare you for an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison."

While the affliction feels heavy at the time. This word from God tells us the Truth. That affliction is light compared to the weight of the glory you will receive from bearing that affliction.

Jesus tells us in Matthew 10:38 "Whoever does not take his cross and follow Me is not worthy of Me." We each have a cross to carry, financial hardship, death of a loved one, loss of a friendship, cancer, hospitalization, trouble at work, car break downs, lost keys, the list goes on and on. But each of those afflictions, though difficult and cumbersome to carry, are *temporary and light*.

In the next chapter of Matthew we find Jesus urging His followers to

"Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." (11:29-30)

A yoke is the rabbi's teaching, this is why in verse 29 He follows "take My yoke upon you" with "and learn from Me". The teaching of Jesus is as simple as any of them get - LOVE. And in Him alone our souls find true rest. The burden He places on our shoulders is LIGHT. We are called to be His light-bearers, torches of love to a dark and dying world. We are to be an ever-present help to others in times of trouble; Jesus' hands and feet to the helpless and broken.

Christ carried the heavy cross so that we wouldn't have to. (We wouldn't have been able to if we tried anyway.) His lessons for us are easy and His burden upon us is light, it's our future glory that is heavy.

It's like Dory from [Finding Nemo](#) says, "Just keep swimming, just keep swimming, just keep swimming.."

Just keep swimming my little fish, this temporary affliction will pass and all that will be left is your reward. "An eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison".

# Vain Efforts

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Looking back over today's reading and the things I underlined I noticed a theme. Let's see if you can pick up on it before I give it away:

"And I will subdue all your enemies. Moreover, I declare to you that the LORD will build you a house." 1 Chronicles 17:10

"There is none like You, O LORD," 1 Chronicles 17:20

"For You, my God, have revealed to your servant that You will build a house for him." 1 Chronicles 17:25

"for it is You, O LORD, who have blessed and it is blessed forever." 1 Chronicles 17:27

"Be strong, and let us use our strength for our people and for the cities of our God, and may the LORD do what seems good to Him," 1 Chronicles 19:13

The LORD will subdue all your enemies and will build you a house. You, O LORD, are different; You will build a house for your servant. You have blessed so it is blessed forever. May the LORD do what seems good to Him.

It all reminded me of a verse that we have had taped to our bathroom mirror since we were first married 13 years ago.

Psalm 127 "Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain. It is in vain that you rise up early and go late to rest, eating the bread of anxious toil; for He gives to His Beloved sleep. Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one's youth. Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them! He shall not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the gate."

I love the point of this Psalm, unless God is in it, it won't be fruitful. I find it beautiful that Solomon of all people wrote this Psalm. Because there was this house that his dad, David, desperately wanted to build but God said, "No. Not you, but your son." Solomon was that son. "Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labor in vain."

No amount of effort on my part is going to build a house if God isn't on board with it. No amount of ADT Security equipment is going to keep a robber out of my house if God isn't protecting it. No amount of staying up late and getting up early to work is going to produce money that lasts. No amount of money can produce a child within a womb if God isn't the one who put it there. "There is none like You, O LORD." "For it is You, O LORD, who have blessed and it is blessed forever." "May the LORD do what seems good to Him."

There are so many hopes, dreams and aspirations that we strain to achieve. Yet there is no possible way we can achieve them

on our own. No amount of late night chapters written by the glow of a computer screen are going to land me that coveted book deal if God doesn't want me to have it. Proverbs 23:4-5 says, "Do not toil to acquire wealth; be discerning enough to desist. When your eyes light on it, it is gone, for suddenly it sprouts wings, flying like an eagle toward heaven."

Oh how I have seen the many sprouted wings of money! It seems like no matter how big or small those paychecks are, they always seem to sprout wings and fly out our door! It makes me think of that scene in Charlotte's Web when the baby spiders finally hatch and Wilber is so excited to see them and without hardly a hello or goodbye they're gone with the wind. It's a very helpless feeling. And yet, what was that scripture yesterday?

"So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light and momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of

glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the unseen are eternal. 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

If the LORD builds it, your effort is not in vain.



# Sacrifice

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"Then Ornan said to David, 'Take it, and let my lord the king do what seems good to him. See, I give the oxen for burnt offerings and the threshing sledges for the wood and the wheat for a grain offering; I give it all.' But King David said to Ornan, 'No, but I will buy them for the full price. I will not take for the LORD what is yours, nor offer burnt offerings that cost me nothing.'" 1 Chronicles 21:23-24

Lord, I am so bewildered, befuddled, a little angry and just downright confused! You promised me this child of blessing, I believed you. And then I waited; nothing, no child. So I waited longer; nothing, no child. Sarah said take Hagar. So I did, that was a mistake. Then You came with Your two friends and spoke hope into Sarah's womb, she laughed, we conceived, the child finally came! We've held this child of

promise. We adored his laughter, his smile, and his childish tumblings. I love him more than my heart can admit. And now you're telling me that I must sacrifice him?

Lord, I don't understand. It just doesn't make sense. You've asked me to kill the source of my tremendous joy. To give all that I have been promised. You gave me more than I could've ever hoped or imagined and now you're asking for it all back? Why? What could you possibly need him for more than I do? He's my son. He's my legacy. He's my great reward.

Abraham, I AM your great reward. I AM your legacy. I AM your Father and I know what is best. Trust Me. I love you.

Lord, I may not understand Your reasoning. I may not understand all the "whys". But I do understand Your love. And I will take hope in Your love for me. Please allow me to take shelter under Your wings and allow me refuge from this storm of emotions tearing through my heart as I do my best to carry out this

difficult task. You never said this job would be easy, just that it would all be worth it in the end.

I understand they're called sacrifices for a reason and I will obey and choose to trust You with the end results. No matter how hard or how painful I choose to follow Your direction because at least then I have the reassurance that the pain has a purpose and a possible reward at the end. I choose not to "offer burnt offerings that cost me nothing." (1 Chronicles 21:24)



# Solomon's Temple

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Word  
of  
the  
Day | [Chronicles 25:1-29:30](#)

[Click here](#) to visit the website for the video devotional for this day. If the link doesn't work, or you're reading this in print format go to [www.TamarKnochel.com](http://www.TamarKnochel.com), locate the search box, and type in "Solomon's Temple" (make sure to include the quotation marks around the title, it helps).



# Sabbath

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NO  
READING  
TODAY!





# Speechless

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Word  
of  
the  
Day [2 Chronicles 1:1-5:14](#)

"It was the duty of the trumpeters and singers to make themselves heard" 2 Chronicles 5:13

You know, I have been trying to write for the last hour and it's just not coming out. So I'm taking that as my hint to just leave it at that. I am praying for you today that you have an amazingly blessed day in the LORD! I love you guys!



# Breathless

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Word  
of the  
Day [2 Chronicles 6:1-9:31](#)

"And when the queen of Sheba had seen the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, the food of his table, the seating of his officials, and the attendance of his servants, and their clothing, his cupbearers, and their clothing, and his burnt offerings that he offered at the house of the LORD, *there was no more breath in her.*" 2 Chronicles 9:3-4

My friends, can I just say, I love my new church! In the last seven days I have met with them three times and each time I have felt the LORD's presence like never before in a public setting. I have never experienced "church" this way before. I have always been sensitive to the Holy Spirit and His direction, I haven't always obeyed but I have always heard. Anyway, In the last few years while spending purposeful time in His word I've gotten even more sensitive to His movements.

Issachar church is blessed! They long for the presence of the LORD to be in their midst as much as He longs for them and He doesn't disappoint them by not showing up! It's been amazing to me how I've had experiences with the Holy Spirit on my own, but never with a group of people!

I feel like the Queen of Sheba today, breathless, having gone through the house of God and lost myself in the art of praise. I am breathless at the Grace that God bestows and how wonderful it is to fall INTO Grace.

I am desperately in love with Him for the way He "makes us lie down in green pastures" Psalm 23:2 in those times when we need to rest but don't feel like we can give ourselves permission to. Time with Jesus isn't a luxury, it's a necessity! He is Life and breath and bread, without time in His presence we perish; both in the spiritual and the physical.



[it's a matter of life and death]

It doesn't have to be just going to church. Actually, church is a supplement to our nourishment. God told me once during church that we should be feeding ourselves spiritually with the Bible at home daily; the message on Sunday is just like going out to eat instead of fixing dinner. If you only ate one meal, one day a week your body would be skinny and devastatingly malnourished barely able to function properly. The same is true with your spirit. If the only thing you're doing is going to church and thinking that's enough Jesus for

the week then you are sadly mistaken. There is a reason He referred to Himself as the DAILY bread. It's because He is to be eaten DAILY.

For some of you, this may be me preaching to the choir. At least I hope so anyway. But I've learned that there is a difference between reading a scripture here and there throughout the day, and making the time to sit down for a solid 30 minutes to read a daily portion of the Bible. In both instances you're "in the word daily", but one is purposeful and distinct while the other is sporadic and much easier to forsake when life gets hectic. And you know that it will! **Because it ALWAYS does.**

I could stand around and say that I "don't have time" to read for 30 minutes every day. But I would be lying to you. Because if I have time to watch a 30 minute show on TV, or sit and talk to a friend for 30 minutes, then I do have the time. I'm just not putting it toward

something that's going to sustain me for the rest of my day.

God has taken my daily time in His word and shown me things that I never could have imagined on my own. He's used His Word to speak Life into a situation that I thought was dead in the water. How? Because He is LIFE! He is everything we could ever need and until we figure that out, we're lost.

There are a LOT of things that you could do with your time, but none of them will compare to spending purposeful time in the presence of God Almighty, maker of heaven and earth! Make the decision today to set aside 30 minutes of your day, every day, at any time of the day, to spend time reading the Bible. I challenge you to try it for 7 days. Just one week. That's not that big of a commitment right? That's not such a big deal. But I promise you that if you do it, in that week God will reveal Himself to you in a way you've never experienced before and it will knock your socks off! You will get a taste of what

He is, and you will see that He is GOOD. Are you willing to give God 30 minutes of your life for seven days to take your breath away? If you are, please let me know, I would LOVE to pray for you!

# Spinach

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Word  
of the  
Day [2 Chronicles 10:1-15:19](#)

"And when Judah looked, behold, the battle was in front of and behind them. And they cried to the LORD, and the priests blew the trumpets. Then the men of Judah raised the battle shout. And when the men of Judah shouted, God defeated Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah." 2 Chronicles 14:14-15



Have you ever been there? I'm sure you have. You know, that place where you look up and the battle isn't just in front of you, it's behind

you too. You're surrounded, and trapped and helpless. There is a choice to make in that moment, keep fighting or surrender. And it is in that moment where it is key to know your opponent! Who is it exactly that you're fighting?

Ephesians 6:12 says, "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places."

We aren't fighting other people. We're not in a battle with the attorneys, or against the bank, or against our spouse. We are battling with the spiritual forces behind the attorneys, the bank, our spouse. These people are the hostages held up between us and the true Enemy. And the longer you battle the flesh and blood problem and not the spirit behind it, the longer that Spirit will continue pushing you further back.

Right now, if you're having trouble with your finances, and it seems like money is running through your fingers faster than sand, you're not struggling with money. You're struggling with Greed. Fight Greed not money and you'll win every time.

If you're struggling with your weight and it just doesn't seem to want to come off. You're not fighting the battle of the bulge; you're fighting the spirit of Indulgence.

In both instances the world will tell you to tell yourself, "No, I don't need that new pair of shoes. These work just fine." Or, "No, a second cupcake is too much." But you're not fighting you! The battle isn't against flesh and blood; it's against the spirit that has been influencing your flesh and blood. Yes, you still need to say "no" to those things. But you're not telling you "no", you're telling the Spirit-monkey on your back "no"!

Let's say it, just for fun. Say, "NO!" as loud as you can! In James 4 verses 7 & 8 God reveals to us the secret of victory. "Submit

yourselves to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you." There's a formula here that I want you to see:



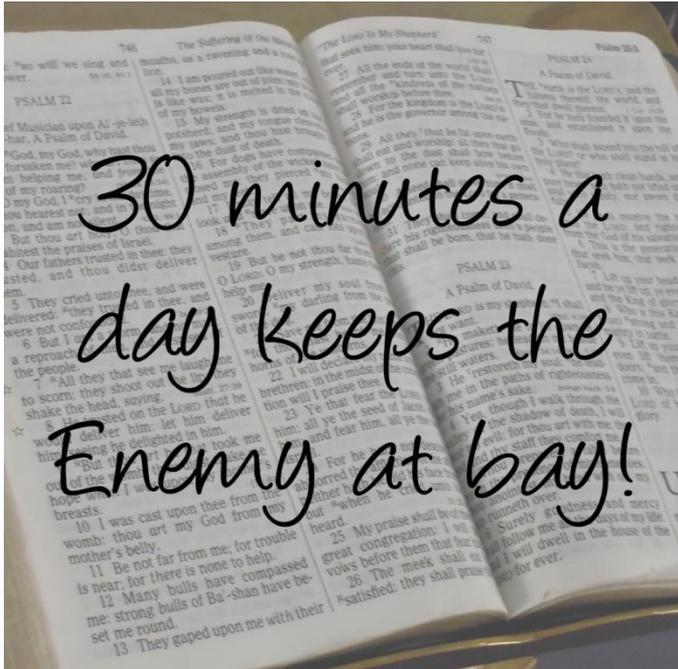
- 1) **Submit yourself to God:** Submit yourself to His leadership in the battle, to His authority over you (AND the spirits you battle) and to His amazingly abundant love for YOU. He wants to see you saved from this light and momentary trouble even more than you do! Submit to Him and He will be your shelter. Not just a storm shelter, your home shelter. Your place of refuge, comfort and REST from the battle that rages outside that door.



2) **Resist the Devil:** He is doing everything he can to cause you to trip and fall and screw things up. Ignore his temptations! God has made the **POWER** of His Holy Spirit available to all who believe in the name of Jesus and call on Him for salvation ("Jesus save me") and power to defeat this Enemy ("Holy Spirit of Jesus, I welcome you into my heart. Please guide me into all truth and away from this father of lies! In Jesus Name! Amen!")\*



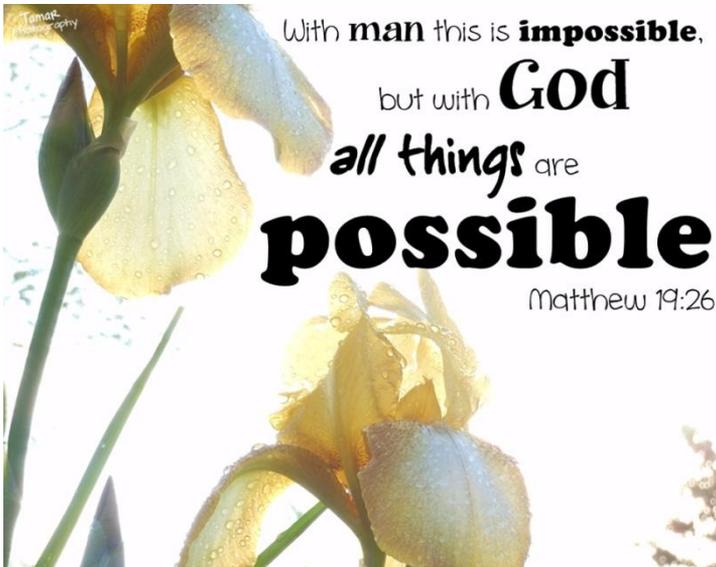
3) He *will* flee from you: This is an ongoing battle. We push the Enemy back, he retaliates. It's a cycle, but it's a diminishing cycle! The more ground we win the less ground he has to stand on. The more we resist his temptations the more ground we gain and the less ground he has. Every temptation we cave to is allowing Satan to gain our territory. So every time you stab your fork into a spinach salad instead of cake you can picture yourself piercing the heart of the spirit of Indulgence and gaining lost territory. The longer you do it, the better you will get until it's not even a battle anymore. He just turns into a pesky fly that you smack and kill.



4) Draw near to God and He will draw near to you: I have been harping on this a lot this week and I'm going to keep doing it (a) because the Holy Spirit is leading me to and (b) because I know it's important. You've got to read a portion of your Bible daily! God has blessed me with a reading plan that is simple and quick. 30 minutes a day is NOT a lot! There are 1,440 minutes in your day, spending 30 reading your Bible leaves you with 1,410. See, it hardly leaves a dent! But the impact that those 30 concentrated

minutes with God can have on your life is immeasurable!

The words that you read in those 30 minutes will stick with you all day long. God will use them to give you the strength and hope to keep going when all you want to do is quit! Those 2 ½ pages of reading are like spinach to [Popeye](#), they will make you strong to the finish, because you ate your spinach! And it will make it possible for you to say, "O Satan, do not fight against the LORD, MY GOD, for you can not succeed!" (adapted from 2 Chronicles 14:12)



\* If you prayed this prayer please email me ([tamarknochel@gmail.com](mailto:tamarknochel@gmail.com)) and let me know so my team and I can pray for you by NAME! We love you and want to do everything we can to support you!





# My Battle or God's?

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Word  
of the  
Day [2 Chronicles 16:1-20:23](#)

I think this first half of chapter 20 is one of my all time favorite stories. Maybe because I can relate so personally with it, I'm not sure, I just know that I love it. Here's Jehoshaphat, a relatively good king, and he is informed that a "great multitude" is headed their way. Eep! And the Word says that he was afraid. But he didn't panic and he didn't scramble around like a crazy person in terror, he didn't even call together all his wise men for advice. Nope. The Bible says that he "set his face to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah." And then the entire country gathered together to pray and see what the LORD would answer them. In Jehoshaphat's prayer he points out to God that He had promised this land to this people. That this horde that was heading their way was the same group that God wouldn't let them drive

out of the land in previous years and now they're coming after Judah to drive them out instead! He even goes so far as to say to God, "If disaster comes upon us, the sword, judgment, or pestilence or famine, we will stand before this house and cry out to you in our affliction, and you will hear and save." (2 Chronicles 20:9) But this is the statement that Jehoshaphat makes that I feel we can relate the best with, "For we are powerless against this great horde that is coming against us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you." (2 Chronicles 20:12)



[Baby Inch Worm on a Blanket - that's powerless]

How often have we all been in those situations where we truly feel powerless to turn the tides? We have no idea what to do to change

the circumstances we're in. Yet we are not powerless because we have the all powerful living and breathing within ourselves. The Spirit of the Almighty God dwells in YOU, therefore you are not without hope or power. You see, when our hope is in HIM our situations are anything but hopeless. When our strength is found in HIM we are anything but powerless!

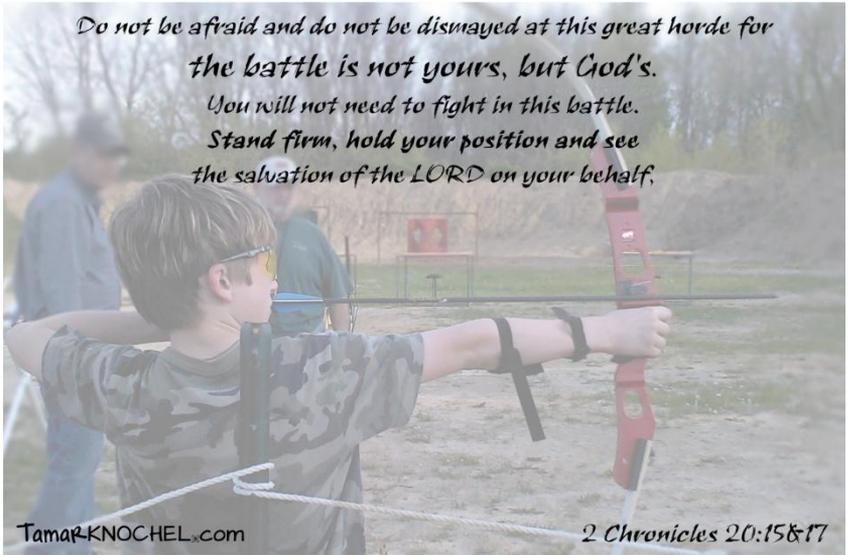


What was the LORD's response to Jehoshaphat's plea for help?

"Do not be afraid and do not be dismayed at this great horde for the battle is not yours, but God's... You will not need to fight in this battle. Stand

firm, hold your position and see the salvation of the LORD on your behalf, O Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid and do not be dismayed. Tomorrow go out against them, and the LORD will be with you." (2 Chronicles 20:15&17)

Don't be afraid. Why? Because this isn't your fight! Yesterday we talked about the importance of knowing your enemy. And that the Word tells us that we don't fight against other people, we fight against the dark spirits of this world. They are our enemy, not the humans being held hostage by them. Today God is reminding us that we **MUST** remember who the Enemy really is, because that then reminds us of whose battle it really is. How can we fight what we can't see? How can we command what we can't name? How can we know the unknown? Only through Christ.



I think it is so funny that I searched high and low for this very scripture yesterday. I wanted so desperately to remind you that this wasn't OUR battle to fight because it's His. But He kept me from finding this verse. I even put it out there on Facebook and no one responded! But God knew that it was just one page flip away and He wanted me to focus on it today rather than just throw it into the message yesterday.

This great horde that you're facing today; a mountain of debt that you're powerless to pay, a multitude of cancer cells that you're helpless to fight, a death of a loved one that

your unable to bring back, it feels hopeless... but it's not! Because when our hope is in the LORD we are never hopeless! He is the Almighty! He is ALWAYS faithful. And while He may not bring the victory in the way that we desire or long for, I can guarantee you with 100% certainty that you have been given a victory in Christ that is beyond all compare!

# Victory in Christ

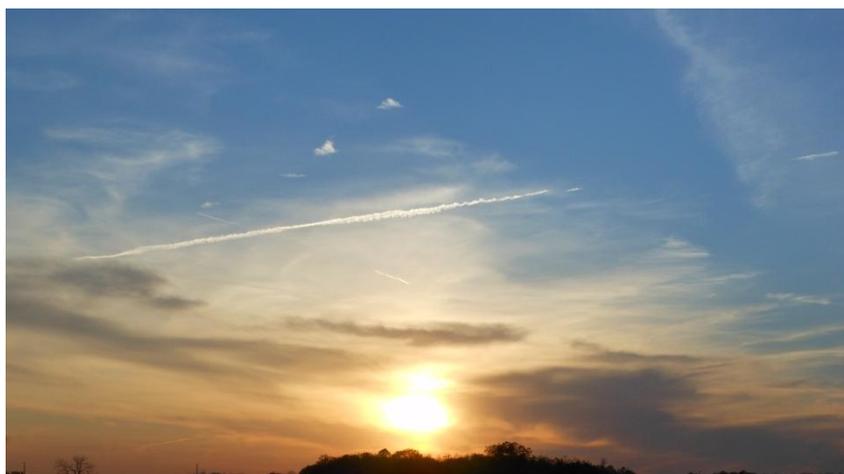
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Word  
of the  
Day [2 Chronicles 20:24-24:19](#)

[[song: victory in Jesus](#)]

Victories these days look a little different than they used to. It used to be that if your team had the most people still alive at the end of the battle you won. If you were the last one to call "Uncle", you won. Today the battle isn't fought on a huge field with swords and chariots. It's fought in your mind and in your heart with words and faith. The words that win the battle, are the words found in your Bible. Romans 10:17 tells us that "faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ." What is the word of Christ? The BIBLE! All of it! How can you know the words that will defeat the Enemy if you never read your Bible for yourself? How will you have the faith to slay the giant if you never hear the words of Christ? Still not convinced that it's imperative to read your Bible daily? Check

out Hebrews 11:6 "Without faith it is impossible to please Him. For whoever would draw near to God must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who seek Him." This is a hard verse for me to share, but I promised you and God both that "what my God says, that I will speak". (2 Chronicles 18:13) This is the Word of God, it is the truth, without faith it is IMPOSSIBLE to please God. What brings God pleasure? Your faith in Him! Hebrews 11:1 tells us that "faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." Although the LORD is not a God that you can see sitting on a shelf, do you believe that He exists? That brings Him pleasure!



Are you seeking His presence? That brings Him pleasure!



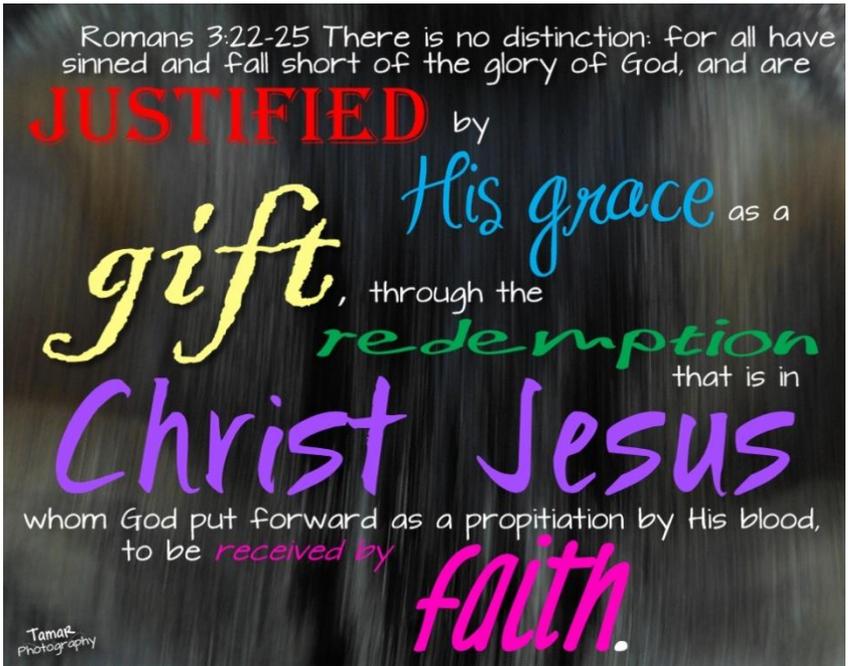
Do you believe that He rewards those who seek Him? That brings Him pleasure!



Personally, the first two are easy. Does He exist? I've experienced too much to believe otherwise. Do I seek Him? LOL! I've experience too much to do otherwise! Do I believe that He rewards those who seek Him? Sure! Do I

believe that applies to me personally? That part is a lot harder for me to accept. I know who I am and what I've done. I know the thoughts I've thought and the things I've done or not done. Plus who am I that He would reward ME? I admit it's an extremely hard pill to swallow. The Enemy has worked my entire life to keep me from taking this Truth and applying it to my life. The other day the Holy Spirit gave me a perfect visual of salvation that I think really applies to everything in the kingdom.

Jesus died to save the WHOLE WORLD, not just the Jews and not just those that were present at that time, but everyone in all of time. His death was a sacrifice that He offered on our behalf effectively paying our price of admission to heaven and onto the lap of God the Father as His child. You are His CHILD and everything that that implies. This sacrifice of the cross was given to us as a gift.



You don't pay for gifts, you just accept them. But here's the picture that God gave me the other day. I can give you the gift of a bar of soap, but just because I give it to you doesn't mean that you will accept it, and it doesn't mean that you will choose to use it. Those things are completely up to you.

Just because Jesus' death has been given to us as a gift from the LORD, who adores us, doesn't mean that we will accept that gift. Or that we will use it to declare ourselves righteous through Christ and eligible for

receiving rewards from Him. ([Romans 3:22](#))  
Those things only happen through faith. And faith comes through hearing. And hearing comes through the Word of Christ.

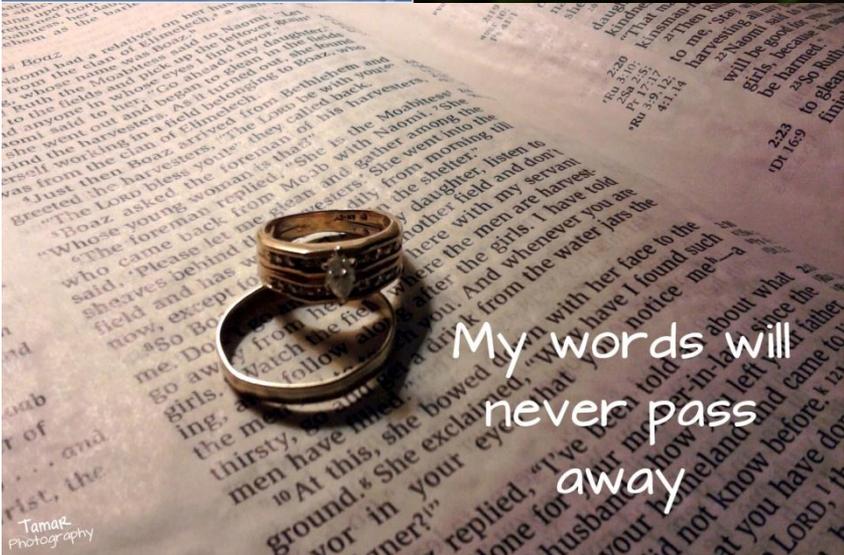


Heaven and



earth will pass away.

Tamara Photography



My words will never pass away

Tamara Photography

# Impossible Dreams

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Word  
of the  
Day [2 Chronicles 24:20-28:21](#)

"The LORD is able to give you much more than this." 2 Chronicles 25:9

One day when I was in Kindergarten, or thereabouts, my mom said something to me that would stick with me forever. She said, "Honey, I think you'd make a really good teacher someday." I can't remember exactly how old I was at the time, but I remember how it made me feel when she said it. It felt like I'd been hit by a lightning bolt of revelation. I certainly wouldn't have described it that way at the time mind you, I was like, 6. But more than anything I remember that feeling coming from deep inside me that she had said something deep and right. In that moment I knew that I wanted to be a teacher. And from that moment on that's all I've ever wanted to be. But at the time that this dream of teaching was born "I was a child, I spoke

like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child." (1 Corinthians 13:11) I was a child in elementary school, surrounded with women who taught elementary school and seemed to really love me for me. At the time that was all the higher I was able to dream because I didn't know any differently.

As I grew the dream to be an elementary teacher solidified and become firm in my mind. I was going to be an elementary teacher. Period. When I got to high school all my friends knew that I wanted to teach elementary school. One of my friends went so far as to tease me that I should work with the Kindergarteners because they would be the only ones I could teach that would be shorter than me and take me seriously. (I'm 5 foot 2... on a good day.) I hated his taunt and vowed to *\*never\** teach little kids.

Once I made it to college and I was studying at Purdue to be an elementary teacher, when something interesting started happening. There was this desire birthed inside me that was

different from the original dream. I remember the classroom, the teacher, the other students in the room when the revelation started. I realized that I wanted to teach the building blocks of life. I wanted to teach them how to take a good test, how to be a good friend, how to survive in life. I wanted to teach so much more than what they were offering me to teach. I wanted to teach about LIFE more than math or reading or spelling.

So while I was still on my path to be the awesome elementary teacher I had always dreamed of being, there was disquiet in my soul about it now. Without my realizing it, the dream had changed. While I still desperately wanted to teach, I wasn't exactly sure that elementary school was the right place for me anymore. But I was a semester or two from graduating, and I still wanted to teach so I carried on with my studies and graduated.

Just before graduation September 11<sup>th</sup> hit and changed our world forever. My husband and I

had been married just over a year at that point and were considering having a baby. Then the towers fell and world was suddenly plunged into a darkness we had never experienced before. And the only thought in my head was, "how can we bring a child into a world like this?" But then God countered with, "If people like you never bring children of light into this world it will always be dark." And by the time I walked across the stage at graduation I was fully pregnant. We moved back home to be close to our parents and I applied for a job at the local elementary school where they all knew and loved me. I got an interview fairly easily. But then the unthinkable happened. I was admitted into the hospital at 33 weeks gestation for pre-eclampsia (high blood pressure). I was there for about a week before our son Gabriel was born.



He was born the day before my interview. I didn't get the only job they had available to me. The door to that particular dream had officially shut. And really, I was OK with it. Mostly because at the time I was still battling for my life! But I'll have to tell you more about that part later.



Gabe was about six months old when a daycare center opened up the next town over. We needed extra income and it was the ONLY thing for a teacher in the area. I applied and the owner thought she had died and gone to heaven. She couldn't believe I wanted a job there instead of at the elementary school. I explained that there was nothing for me there and she snatched me up like a hot pancake fresh off the griddle. I was promoted to daycare director within a month of working there. And I LOVED it. Here I had been swearing I would NEVER work with little kids and now I was working with toddlers

every day and thinking it was the best thing since sliced bread.

Shortly after settling into my role as director we moved again. This time, to Glendale Heights, a suburb of Chicago, so that my husband could go back to school to be a mechanic. While there I tried my best to get a subbing job at the school that was located in our back yard but they weren't hiring at the time. Imagine that. But I did manage to get a job in a local daycare center as a floating substitute. Except two weeks before I was set to start they had 15 kids enroll, this is absolutely unheard of. So they needed to open up a new classroom and guess who got to teach it. ME! I was in heaven. For the first time I had my own classroom, my own students, I was a real teacher. I was in love.

For the next five years I taught in three different preschool daycares and loved almost every second of it. I didn't stay at that first one very long though because it was a corporate daycare and I could feel God

calling me to a church daycare down the street.



There I was teaching children the true building blocks of life; both the physical ones and the spiritual ones. I was living the dream. But it wasn't anything like the dream I had first started dreaming. It had grown and changed as I grew and changed and learned more about myself and who God was calling me to be.



Eventually I risked death once more in order to have our baby girl and my husband and I both could feel the Holy Spirit nudging us to take the financial plunge and have me stay home with the kids.



And this is where things really started changing. That first year home with a newborn was one of the hardest in my life. We had a new house, a new baby, I had a new job, it was crazy to say the least. But I had one salvation; our local women's Bible study. That weekly meeting kept me sane through the chaos. But more than that, it was through that Bible study that God awakened something new in me. While I had always loved the LORD and had a relationship with Him; it was time to kick the teaching dream into real high gear. So He reawakened my dream and love for writing. A dream so dead in my life that I had completely forgotten I had had it in the first

place. When I announced on Facebook that I was writing a book about God and sex ([True Intimacy](#)) I had a friend from middle school tell me that she still had all my short stories from that time. Stories I didn't even remember writing she had kept for over ten years!

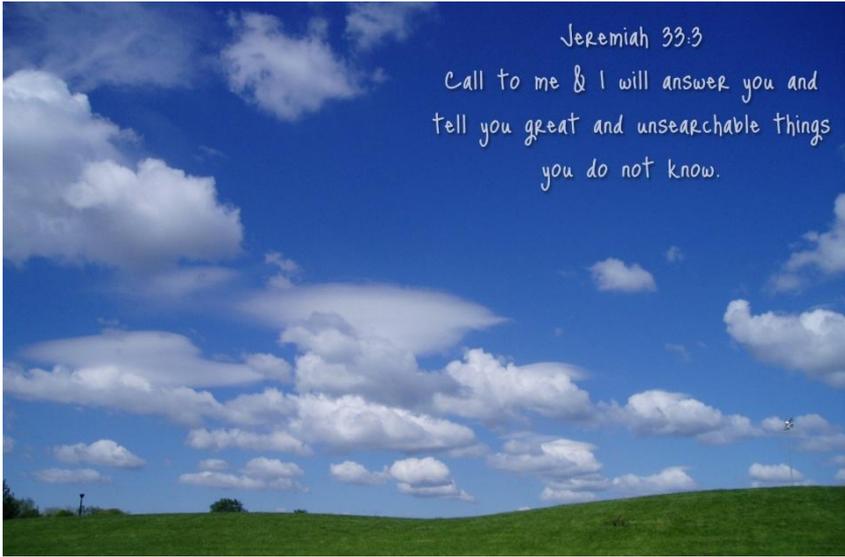
Even before I met my husband, I had dreamt of being a writer, a good one. It was a dream that I hardly even entertained because at that point it didn't fit with my larger and longer lived dream of being an elementary teacher. I was still a child thinking like a child at that point. I was literally incapable of thinking any larger than the box I was currently in. Honestly, because I was dreaming up to the sides of the box... but never past what I could see as possibly achievable.

But then I started writing [True Intimacy](#) and **everything** changed. I was still teaching that dream has never died and I doubt it ever will. I was born to teach. I've come to the point where I've realized that I can teach just about

anybody just about anything depending on the circumstance. When I was a child my dream was to be like those teachers I loved when I was in their classrooms. My dream is so different now, and yet completely the same. The Holy Spirit is my teacher; I'm an eternal student in His classroom of Life. And I want to be a teacher like Him in whatever classroom He chooses to place me in. Right now that classroom is [my website](#), my [books](#) and my newspaper article. I'm also teaching [social media classes](#) at the local library. When I was a child my largest and grandest dream was to have my very own classroom that I could decorate any way that I chose and to teach whatever I felt appropriate. And while I no longer dream of an elementary classroom filled with construction paper decorations that fade in the sunlight, I do dream of souls saved by the Son light. I pray God uses me to bring His marvelous light into their lives. My classroom is the world.

At last count my website has been viewed by people in over seventy countries. My articles

are in over a thousand homes in the area weekly with the numbers steadily rising. My deepest desire is no longer to teach children how to take a good test; it's so much bigger than that. My dream is to teach the children of God how to pass the tests of life when they seem oh so impossible. I want to bring hope to the hopeless through the Word of Christ, because how can they believe if no one ever shares things with them? How will they hear if no one ever tells them? I have a heart for the lost children of God who think they have Him and know Him when in reality all they have is the dry bones of religion and nothing more. How will they know there is more to the abundant life if someone doesn't tell them?



Jeremiah 33:3

Call to me & I will answer you and  
tell you great and unsearchable things  
you do not know.

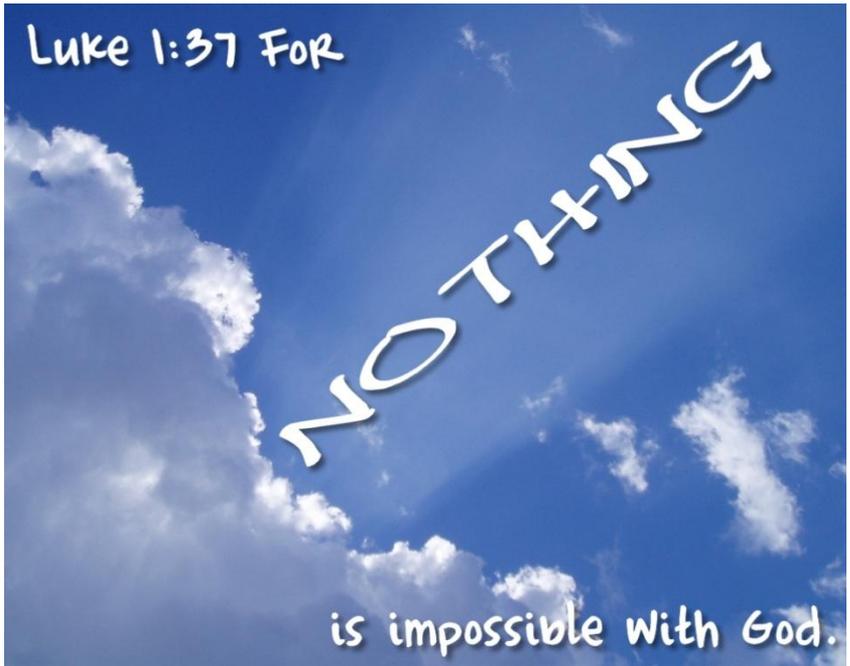
Jeremiah 33:3 says, "Call to Me and I will answer you and I will tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know." I have lived this more times in the last thirty-three years than I can count! God is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we could ask or imagine through the power found in Christ Jesus, (Ephesians 3:20) if we would only believe in Him. God has challenged me over the years to "dream big" and I feel like I have. Yet I know that my dreams still pale in comparison to the plans that He has for me.



He has plans for my welfare and not for evil, to give me a future and a hope. (Jeremiah 29:11) "For now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known." (1 Corinthians 13:12) When I was a child, I dreamt a possible dream. Now as an adult I have chosen to dream an impossible dream. It's a dream that I can't possibly achieve on my own, not ever. But God has placed it in my heart none-the-less. It's a dream where I write the books the world reads because they're hungry for the bread from heaven. It's a

dream where I stand on a stage before thousands of people and lead them through a prayer of salvation followed by a worship and praise that they've been holding in their entire lives. I dream for people to KNOW Him like Adam knew Eve, intimately and beyond all shame because they've been eternally forgiven and not condemned. None of that is possible without God. [Apart](#) from God we can do nothing, but a part of Him we can do everything!

So often I feel like Mary in [Luke chapter 1](#) when the angel Gabriel comes to her and tells her that she has been chosen to birth the Christ child and she says, "how can this be?" And the angel replies, "Nothing is impossible with God".

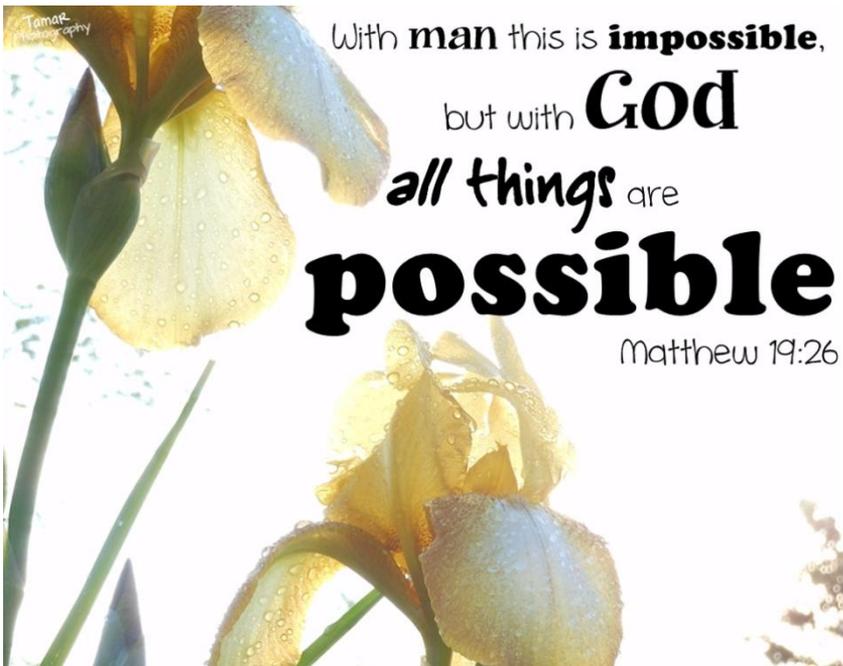


Often I find myself praying and thanking God for using me for this or for that and I will say, "Lord, you could have used anybody to do that, but you used me. Thank You!" Do you know what He said the last time I prayed that, "No. I couldn't have used just anybody. I could only use you." And I knew that He had a point.

We are all made so uniquely that we all have a unique purpose in this world. We were created to perform certain jobs and functions that only we can do. And if we're not doing them then who will get them done? If we're not

doing the job that we were created for then that job isn't getting done correctly.

I was created to be a teacher. A teacher of the Word of God. I know that now. I NEVER in a million years would have known that in Kindergarten. I couldn't dream that high. I still have trouble dreaming that high. But I know that as long as I keep following the Man with the plans I'll get there. Somehow. Someday. In His way. Until then, I'll keep dreaming the impossible dream that the God of all hope gave me to dream. He is a good God who fulfills His promises. No matter how impossible they may seem to us.



Tamar  
Photography

With **man** this is **impossible**,  
but with **God**  
*all things* are  
**possible**

Matthew 19:26



# Sabbath

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NO  
READING  
TODAY!





# About the Author

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Tamar Knochel has been married to her wonderful husband S. Christian Knochel for thirteen years and is a stay at home mother of two; Gabriel age ten and Anna age six. She spends most of her time shuffling between church and extra-curricular activities in addition to leading a women's prayer group and writing. She studied Elementary Education at Purdue University and taught Preschool for 5 years before deciding to stay at home with her children when their youngest was born. Shortly after leaving work as a preschool teacher she had an encounter with God where she was called to teaching adults through a writing ministry; something she hadn't even considered as a past-time let alone a career! For more information, her other books and resources visit her website [www.TamarKnochel.com](http://www.TamarKnochel.com)



# Next in the Series

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# Jesus



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Knochel



Season 2: Book 2:

2 Chronicles 28:22-Exodus 9:12