

JENCLAIRESHARES

W O R D O F
T H E D A Y

DAILY DEVOTIONAL

JENCLAIRESHARES

I AM SO THANKFUL FOR THE LEADERSHIP THAT GOD HAS EQUIPPED TO LEAD ME. SO THANKFUL FOR THE WAY THAT THEY SURROUND ME, ENCOURAGE AND EQUIP ME TO BE MORE THAN I EVER COULD BE ON MY OWN. THERE IS SUCH POWER IN BEING LED, OUR EFFICACY IS DETERMINED BY OUR WILLINGNESS TO SERVE THOSE GOD HAS CHOSEN TO LEAD US.

THINKING BACK, I REMEMBER SAYING TO GOD WHEN I WAS DECIDING WHAT TO DO WITH MY FUTURE, I AM WILLING TO DO WHATEVER YOU NEED ME TO DO, EXCEPT... I DON'T WANT TO DO SOMETHING THAT REQUIRES INTENSE AMOUNTS OF READING OR WRITING [THESE ARE NOT MY STRENGTHS]. BUT GOD DOESN'T FOCUS ON OUR STRENGTHS. GOD WANTS TO BE EVIDENT IN MAKING US STRONG THROUGH OUR WEAKNESSES.

FAST FORWARD 8 YEARS, AND I NOW HAVE A BACHELOR OF THEOLOGY [WHICH BY THE WAY, IS COMPLETELY READING AND WRITING ESSAYS – LOOK AT GOD REMINDING ME THAT IT'S NOT ABOUT WHAT I WANT, BUT IF I'M WILLING TO DO ANYTHING, THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS].

IF IT WASN'T FOR COVID₁₉ [AND THE YEAR THE WORLD LITERALLY WENT VIRTUAL], I WOULD NEVER HAVE REALIZED THE FULL POTENTIAL OF THE GIFT THAT GOD HAS GIVEN ME. A GIFT THAT MY LEADERS SAW, BUT I NEVER FULLY ACKNOWLEDGED [BECAUSE, WELL, IT WAS NOT A STRENGTH]. IN THIS PROCESS, I HAVE REALIZED THAT GIFTS ARE NOT ALWAYS STRENGTHS. BUT I AM SO THANKFUL THAT I DO NOT NEED TO RELY ON MY STRENGTHS, BUT RATHER TO TRUST GOD'S GRACE IN ME.

MY PRAYER FOR YOU, IS THAT YOU WILL BE INSPIRED TO NOT JUST TAKE LIFE AT FACE VALUE. THAT YOU WOULD BE BRAVE ENOUGH TO GO DEEPER INTO THE THINGS THAT MAKE YOU FEEL WEAK, BECAUSE THAT IS WHERE GOD'S STRENGTH EMPOWERS US TO DO MORE THAN WE EVER COULD IN OUR OWN ABILITY. AS YOU READ THESE WORDS EVERY DAY, I HOPE THAT IT IS A WORD THAT LINGERS THROUGHOUT YOUR DAY, BUT NOT JUST A WORD, MY HOPE IS THAT GOD'S WORD LINGERS WITH YOU THROUGHOUT EACH DAY. REMINDING YOU THAT A SIMPLE WORD CARRIES POWER. GOD'S WORD CARRIES POWER. MAY YOU BE ENCOURAGED AND INSPIRED TO FIND A WORD THAT SPEAKS TO YOU, AND TO FOCUS ON THE WORD OF THE DAY, NOT JUST TODAY, BUT EVERY DAY!

JENCLAIRESHARES

IF WE'RE HONEST, WE HAVE ALL HEARD THE WORD, AMEN; BUT DO WE REALLY UNDERSTAND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS WORD?

THIS WORD HAS BEEN ON MY MIND FOR A FEW MONTHS, AND I HAVE BEEN CHALLENGED TO NOT JUST ACCEPT THE STANDARD DEFINITION THAT THIS WORD CARRIES. MANY WOULD SAY THAT AMEN IS JUST WHAT YOU SAY AT THE END OF A PRAYER [THAT YOU'RE NOT FINISHED PRAYING UNTIL THIS WORD HAS BEEN SAID], OTHERS BELIEVE THAT IT MEANS "SO BE IT."

AND ALTHOUGH THESE ARE BOTH VALID DEFINITIONS OF THE WORD. I THINK THE WORD CARRIES MORE SIGNIFICANCE. IF AMEN JUST MEANS SO BE IT, THEN IT REMOVES OUR RESPONSIBILITY IN THE SITUATION - ALMOST ABNEGATING OUR ROLE AND IMPLYING THAT GOD'S SAY IS THE ONLY WAY. HOWEVER, I'VE HAD A REVELATION THAT AMEN IS NOT ONLY IN GOD'S HANDS BUT THERE IS A CERTAIN CONCURRENCE THAT HAPPENS WHEN WE CHOOSE TO SAY AMEN.

AMEN IS MORE THAN JUST A ONE SIDED, "OKAY FINE, YOU DO IT." AMEN IS A PARTNERSHIP WITH GOD, TWO EVENTS HAPPENING AT ONCE. AMEN REQUIRES A SIMULTANEOUS SURRENDER FROM US AND CONTROL FROM GOD, WORKING IN COMPLETE HARMONY TO ACHIEVE WHAT IS ONLY POSSIBLE WITH GOD.

AMEN IS A STATEMENT OF AGREEMENT, IT IS AN INTENTIONAL "YES, I'M WITH YOU GOD."

WHAT IF EVERYTHING IN OUR LIVES WAS APPROACHED WITH AN AMEN ATTITUDE? WITH A YES, I'M WITH YOU GOD, ATTITUDE. WHAT IF OUR RESPONSE TO THE THINGS OF GOD IS LET'S DO THIS TOGETHER, YOU LEAD THE WAY?

AMEN SUMS UP ALL THAT WE BELIEVE IN CHRISTIANITY. I CANNOT EXIST WITHOUT MY CREATOR, THE ONE WHO WANTS TO DO LIFE WITH ME. NOT BECAUSE I AM INCAPABLE BUT BECAUSE HE IS GOD. AND WITH GOD, LIFE IS UNSTOPPABLE.

JESUS CHOSE TO LIVE WITH AN AMEN ATTITUDE. HE CHOSE TO LIVE IN COEXISTENCE WITH HIS CREATOR, TO WALK WITH GOD, NOT BECAUSE HE WAS INCAPABLE [JESUS WAS GOD, AND STILL SURRENDERED TO GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY] JESUS TRUSTED THE FATHER, LET'S TRUST THE FATHER TOO.

PSALM 17:4-5 MSG I'M NOT TRYING TO GET MY WAY IN THE WORLD'S WAY. I'M TRYING TO GET YOUR WAY, YOUR WORD'S WAY. I'M STAYING ON YOUR TRAIL; I'M PUTTING ONE FOOT IN FRONT OF THE OTHER. I'M NOT GIVING UP.

LET'S CHOOSE TO SURRENDER OUR CONTROL, FOR GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY AND CHOOSE TO DO LIFE WITH GOD. HAND IN HAND, SIDE BY SIDE, CHOOSING TO ALLOW GOD TO DIRECT OUR LIVES.

YES, I AM WITH YOU. THAT'S AMEN.

GOD, LET'S DO THIS TOGETHER!

AMEN

JENCLAIRESHARES

THIS WORD REMINDS ME OF A GAME THAT MY BROTHER AND I USED TO PLAY [FULL DISCLOSURE, THIS GAME WAS COMPLETELY INITIATED BY MY BROTHER, AND ONLY MY BROTHER]; CALLED MERCY.

IT'S A 90'S KID THING, SO FOR THOSE WHO HAVE NEVER HEARD OF THIS GAME. IT'S WHEN ONE PERSON TAKES A HARD GRIP ON ANOTHER PERSON [AT TIMES AN AGREED UPON MATCH, BUT IN MY CASE, I WAS UNAWARE OF THE INCOMING PAIN] AND THE PERSON HOLDS THE GRIP, MAKING IT EVER SO TIGHTER, UNTIL ONE PERSON CONCEDES AND SAYS MERCY.

I NEVER REALLY THOUGHT OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MEANING OF THE WORD MERCY, UNTIL I SUDDENLY REALIZED WHY THE "GAME" WAS CALLED MERCY. IN THE GAME, YOU TAKE AS MUCH PAIN AS POSSIBLE BEFORE SAYING MERCY, BECAUSE THE AIM OF THE GAME IS NOT TO GIVE IN FIRST...

THINKING BACK, THIS GAME FORMED THE FOUNDATION IN MY MIND THAT WHEN PAIN INCREASES YOU JUST HAVE TO TAKE IT, BECAUSE ADMITTING MERCY, IS ADMITTING DEFEAT.

MERCY IN THIS CASE, IS SIMPLY - I JUST CAN'T ANYMORE. I SURRENDER.

THIS IS TRUE IN OUR LIVES AS WELL, ESPECIALLY WHEN WE FEEL LIKE LIFE HAS A TIGHT GRIP ON US, WHEN THERE IS CONSTANT TENSION, RELENTLESS PAIN AND IT GETS TO A POINT WHERE WE JUST WANT TO SCREAM, "MERCY!"

OH, WE HAVE ALL EXPERIENCED MOMENTS IN LIFE LIKE THIS. BUT I AM SO ENCOURAGED THAT WHEN WE GET TO THE POINT WHERE WE WANT TO SCREAM MERCY - I JUST CAN'T ANYMORE - THAT IT IS NOT ADMITTING DEFEAT; BUT RATHER SURRENDER REQUIRES STRENGTH.

I RECENTLY HEARD THESE WORDS:
"GIVE ME THE STRENGTH TO LET GO. GIVE ME THE STRENGTH TO SURRENDER. I CHOOSE MERCY INSTEAD OF CONTROL."

AND I WAS REMINDED THAT CHOOSING TO SURRENDER TAKES AN INNER STRENGTH THAT WE OFTEN MISPLACE. WE THINK THAT LETTING GO IS A SIGN OF WEAKNESS, BUT SURRENDER IS KNOWING WHEN YOU CANNOT TAKE ANY MORE ON YOUR OWN, CHOOSING TO LET GO REQUIRES STRENGTH - CHOOSING TO WHOLE-HEARTEDLY SURRENDER TO GOD, ALLOWING HIM TO GIVE US THE STRENGTH TO CARRY ON - REQUIRES INNER-STRENGTH.

HEBREWS 4:16 MSG SO LET'S WALK RIGHT UP TO HIM AND GET WHAT HE IS SO READY TO GIVE. TAKE THE MERCY, ACCEPT THE HELP.

GOD DOESN'T WANT TO SEE US CRIPPLED IN PAIN. HE WANTS TO CARRY THE PAIN WITH US AND FOR US.

WILL YOU CHOOSE MERCY? WILL YOU CHOOSE SURRENDER?
IN THE MOMENTS WHEN YOU FEEL LIKE YOU ARE BEGGING FOR MERCY, GOD IS READY TO GIVE US WHAT WE NEED. I LOVE HOW THE PASSION TRANSLATION SHARES THIS SCRIPTURE:

"SO NOW WE COME FREELY AND BOLDLY TO WHERE LOVE IS ENTHRONED, TO RECEIVE MERCY'S KISS AND DISCOVER THE GRACE WE URGENTLY NEED TO STRENGTHEN US IN OUR TIME OF WEAKNESS."

PAIN IS WEAKNESS. MERCY IS STRENGTH.

I CHOOSE MERCY. I CHOOSE SURRENDER.

MERCY

JENCLAIRESHARES

SONGS HAVE AN UNCANNY WAY OF SHAPING MY PERSPECTIVE. ONE OF THOSE LYRICS IS FROM A SONG CALLED THE BONES.

“WHEN THE BONES ARE GOOD, THE REST DON’T MATTER.”

BONES ARE THE FOUNDATION OF WHO WE ARE. OUR BONES GIVE OUR BODIES STRUCTURE, BUT MORE THAN JUST STRUCTURE, BONES ARE OUR BODY’S SOURCE OF WELL-BEING.

WE READ IN SCRIPTURE THAT A CHEERFUL HEART IS GOOD MEDICINE, BUT A CRUSHED SPIRIT DRIES UP THE BONES. THIS IS A PHYSIOLOGICAL FACT, OUR PHYSICAL HEALTH IS SIGNIFICANTLY LINKED TO OUR BONES. WHEN OUR IMMUNE SYSTEM IS COMPROMISED, THE MARROW IN OUR BONES DRIES UP.

WE LITERALLY HAVE DRY BONES WHEN OUR SPIRITS ARE CRUSHED. THIS IS NOT JUST AFFECTED BY PHYSICAL HEALTH, BUT AS A RESULT OF OUR MENTAL HEALTH AS WELL. A LOW IMMUNE SYSTEM INHIBITS THE WELLNESS OF OUR BONES; OUR FOUNDATION AND STRENGTH FOR ENDURANCE.

FOR SOME PEOPLE THEY MIGHT THINK THAT PHYSICAL WELL-BEING AND MENTAL WELL-BEING ARE COMPLETELY UNRELATED, BUT IN THE SAME WAY THAT YOU WOULD BE TREATED FOR ANY PHYSICAL ILLNESS, WE NEED TO DO THE SAME WHEN WE EXPERIENCE MENTAL ILLNESS.

THERE IS NO SHAME IN MENTAL ILLNESS – WE DO NOT FEEL SHAME WHEN WE GET FLU, WE GET TREATMENT. THE SAME SHOULD BE TRUE WITH ANXIETY, DEPRESSION AND ANY OTHER MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES – REMOVE THE SHAME AND GET TREATMENT.

OUR BONES ARE SO MUCH MORE THAN JUST A STRUCTURAL ASPECT OF OUR BODIES, THEY KEEP OUR BODIES TOGETHER, AND THEY KEEP OUR MINDS TOGETHER TOO.

OUR MENTAL HEALTH IS AN IMPORTANT FOUNDATION OF OUR LIVES. THE WAY WE THINK, PERCEIVE AND RESPOND SHAPES WHO WE ARE. OUR BONES SHAPE WHO WE ARE.

SO THE IMPORTANT QUESTION TO ASK OURSELVES IS, WHAT DO MY BONES LOOK LIKE? ARE MY BONES GOOD?

IT WOULD BE SO HELPFUL IF WE COULD X-RAY OUR MINDS AND ANALYZE OUR THOUGHTS TO UNDERSTAND HOW WE ARE REALLY DOING, BUT UNFORTUNATELY WE CAN’T – WE NEED TO DO THE HARD WORK TO ANSWER THAT QUESTION, THROUGH INTROSPECTION AND SELF-AWARENESS.

‘IF OUR BONES ARE GOOD, THE REST DON’T MATTER.’ THE ‘REST’ BEING THE FACTORS AROUND US, THE CHALLENGES WE FACE, THE HIGHS, LOWS AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN.

WE ARE NOT WHAT HAPPENS TO US, CIRCUMSTANCE DOESN’T DEFINE US, BECAUSE WE ARE DEFINED BY GOD. WE ARE DEFINED AS OVERCOMERS.

PROVERBS 17:22 TPT A JOYFUL, CHEERFUL HEART BRINGS HEALING TO BOTH BODY AND SOUL. BUT THE ONE WHOSE HEART IS CRUSHED STRUGGLES WITH SICKNESS AND DEPRESSION.

FOR THOSE FEELING OVERWHELMED, WITH A HEAVY HEART, DON’T IGNORE HOW YOU FEEL OR MINIMIZE YOUR EXPERIENCE. INSTEAD TRUST GOD TO REVEAL IN YOUR LIFE WAYS TO RESTORE YOUR HEART. BECAUSE HE CREATED YOU TO OVERCOME! HE CREATED YOU WITH JOY, TO EXPERIENCE JOY, TOTAL WELL-BEING OF MIND, BODY, SOUL AND SPIRIT!

FOCUS ON FOUNDATION, GOD WILL BRING THE REST TO LIFE.

BONES

JENCLAIRESHARES

I LOVE THE IDEA OF KEEPING SOMETHING. I AM A VERY SENTIMENTAL PERSON, SO KEEPING CARDS, LETTERS AND REMINDERS OF SPECIAL MOMENTS IS IMPORTANT TO ME. I VALUE KEEPING MOMENTS EITHER IN A BOX, OR IN MY HEART.

THIS REMINDS ME OF GOD'S ABILITY TO 'KEEP' US.

KEEP IS DESCRIBED AS TWO ACTIONS,
BOTH SO APPLICABLE TO OUR PERSPECTIVE OF GOD.

1. TO HAVE AND RETAIN POSSESSION OF.
2. CONTINUE IN A SPECIFIC CONDITION, POSITION OR DIRECTION.

KEEP IS NOT FOR A MOMENT, KEEP IS SOMETHING WE CONTINUE DOING
[WE KEEP AT IT].

GOD CONTINUES TO PURSUE US, EVERY DAY, EVEN WHEN WE DON'T WANT TO SPEND TIME WITH GOD. HE NEVER GIVES UP ON WANTING TO ENGAGE WITH US. HE NEVER STOPS. AND IF GOD BELIEVES IN US, THEN SURELY WE CAN BELIEVE IN HIM TOO.

ISAIAH 26:3-4 MSG PEOPLE WITH THEIR MINDS SET ON YOU, YOU KEEP COMPLETELY WHOLE, STEADY ON THEIR FEET, BECAUSE THEY KEEP AT IT AND DON'T QUIT. DEPEND ON GOD AND KEEP AT IT BECAUSE IN THE LORD GOD YOU HAVE A SURE THING.

WHAT A WONDERFUL PICTURE THAT WHEN WE FOCUS AND THINK ABOUT GOD AND THE THINGS OF GOD, HE KEEPS US COMPLETELY WHOLE - NOT PERFECT, BUT WE ARE COMPLETE IN HIM. THERE IS NOTHING MISSING FROM OUR LIVES WHEN WE KEEP OUR FOCUS ON GOD.

WHEN WE CONSTANTLY SET OUR MINDS ON GOD AND LIVE IN THE WAY HE INSTRUCTS US TO, WE HAVE PERFECT PEACE - WE HAVE AN UNEXPLAINABLE WHOLENESS. THERE IS TOTAL WELL-BEING IN OUR LIVES BECAUSE WE KNOW THAT GOD CAN BE TRUSTED TO LEAD US IN EVERY AREA OF OUR LIVES.

WHEN WE'RE STEADY ON OUR FEET, LIKE AN ATHLETE GETTING READY TO START RUNNING A RACE, WE'RE NOT STUCK IN COMFORT, INSTEAD WE ARE READY TO MOVE IN ANY DIRECTION THAT GOD TAKES US.

GOD KEEPS US STEADY, AND WE KEEP DOING WHAT HE ENCOURAGES US TO DO. WE KEEP AT IT BECAUSE GOD IS A SURE THING. IF THERE IS ONE THING THAT WE CAN DEPEND ON, IT'S GOD. HE IS THE ONE IN CONTROL AND HE CAN BE TRUSTED WITH OUR PRESENT, AND GOD CAN ALSO BE TRUSTED WITH OUR FUTURE.

AS A CONTROL FREAK, IT CAN OFTEN BE DIFFICULT TO KEEP DEPENDING ON GOD, BECAUSE I WANT TO BE IN CONTROL. BUT, CHOOSING TO GIVE GOD CONTROL IS A MUCH BETTER IDEA.

KEEPING AT IT IS A DAILY COMMITMENT. A DAILY CHOICE TO KEEP TRUSTING GOD.

LET'S NOT QUIT BECAUSE THINGS MAY BE OUT OF OUR CONTROL.

LET'S NOT QUIT KEEPING OUR MINDS SET ON GOD, AND THE THINGS OF GOD. KEEP AT IT, EVERYTHING MAY NOT BE PERFECT, BUT GOD WILL RESTORE PERFECT PEACE IN YOU AS YOU KEEP YOUR THOUGHTS ON HIM.

LET'S KEEP TRUSTING GOD; JUST LIKE A MOMENT THAT CAN BE CAPTURED IN OUR HEARTS FOREVER,

GOD WILL KEEP YOU STEADY AND WHOLE!

KEEP

JENCLAIRESHARES

WEAKNESSES DON'T MAKE YOU ANY LESS HUMAN. EVERYONE HAS A WEAKNESS,
SOME ARE JUST LESS VISIBLE TO OTHERS.

WEAKNESSES AREN'T A LACK OF FAITH. SOME OF THE MOST FAITH-FULL PEOPLE IN
THE BIBLE HAD WEAKNESSES, THEY HAD ANXIETY, DEPRESSION AND GOD STILL
USED THEM. A RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD DOES NOT MEAN THAT WE BECOME
PERFECT, WE JUST BECOME WHOLE.

JOY IS NOT A MOMENTARY EMOTION, IT'S A POSTURE OF THE HEART. A POSTURE
THAT NEEDS TO BE PRACTICED DAILY IN ORDER TO GAIN STRENGTH.

NEHEMIAH 8:10 NLT THE JOY OF THE LORD IS MY STRENGTH.

THE JOY OF THE LORD IS MY STRENGTH. THE JOY OF THE LORD IS MY STRENGTH.
THE JOY OF THE LORD IS MY STRENGTH. THE JOY OF THE LORD IS MY STRENGTH.
THE JOY OF THE LORD IS MY STRENGTH.

THESE EIGHT WORDS WOULD REPEAT IN MY MIND WHENEVER I WAS FEELING
OVERWHELMED.

BUT I WASN'T TRUSTING GOD'S JOY TO BE MY STRENGTH. I WAS TRUSTING GOD'S
STRENGTH TO BE MY JOY.

THE FULL SPECTRUM OF EMOTION IS ESSENTIAL IF WE WANT TO BE EFFECTIVE. WE
NEED EMOTIONS TO GIVE US PERSPECTIVE, TO UNDERSTAND WHAT WE TRULY
VALUE, AND TO UNDERSTAND EMPATHY FOR OTHERS.

EXPERIENCING EMOTION HAS TAUGHT ME THAT GOD'S JOY IS NOT MY JOY, AND
GOD'S STRENGTH IS NOT MY STRENGTH. IT'S GOD'S JOY THAT IS MY STRENGTH.

WHAT WOULD BE CONSIDERED AS 'THE JOY OF THE LORD.' WHAT BRINGS GOD JOY?
TOO OFTEN [I KNOW I DO THIS AND MAYBE YOU DO TOO], BUT I COMPLICATE THE
MOST SIMPLEST OF THINGS.

SO WHEN I WAS THINKING ABOUT GOD'S JOY, I KNEW THAT IT NEEDED TO BE
SIMPLE. THE FIRST THING THAT CAME TO MIND IS GOD'S CREATION. I CAN
PICTURE GOD'S JOY IN CREATING EVERY SUNRISE, SUNSET AND STARRY NIGHT SKY.
GOD'S JOY IS IN NOTICING EVERYTHING HE CREATED,
HE EVEN FINDS JOY IN EVERY HUMAN HE HAS CREATED. HE FINDS JOY IN SEEING
RELATIONSHIPS GROW - FRIENDSHIPS, MARRIAGE, FAMILY, COMMUNITY - AND
PEOPLE JUST LOVING EACH OTHER WITH A GENUINE LOVE.

GOD'S JOY RESULTS IN MY STRENGTH. SO ON THE DAYS WHEN JOY SEEMS FAR
AWAY, AND I AM OVERWHELMED BY MY WEAKNESSES, I DON'T NEED TO 'SNAP OUT
OF IT' I NEED TO SEEK GOD'S JOY. I CHOOSE TO TAKE A MOMENT TO GAZE IN AWE
OF THE SUNSET, OR LOOK UP AT THE NIGHT SKY JUST TO STARE AT THE STARS.

BUT MORE THAN NOTICING GOD'S MASTERPIECES IN CREATION, I CHOOSE TO
INVEST IN RELATIONSHIPS [THE MASTERPIECES THAT I GET TO CREATE], BECAUSE
THAT IS SOMETHING THAT BRINGS GOD JOY. CALLING THAT FRIEND YOU HAVEN'T
SPOKEN TO IN A WHILE OR PLANNING A COFFEE DATE AND SPENDING TIME WITH
PEOPLE WHO ENCOURAGE YOU THROUGH LIFE.
IT'S THESE MOMENTS THAT I DIDN'T REALISE WERE GIVING ME THE STRENGTH TO
ENDURE. STRENGTH MAY NOT ALWAYS LOOK STRONG. STRENGTH CAN BE DISGUISED
BY JUST MAKING IT THROUGH THE DAY.

ON THE DAYS WHEN IT FEELS AS IF YOU'RE BARELY GOING TO MAKE IT, AND
WEAKNESS OVERWHELMS YOU, STRENGTH IS IN THE MOMENT YOU CHOOSE TO
IGNORE THE WEAKNESS AND FOCUS ON GOD'S JOY!

LET HIS JOY BE YOUR STRENGTH.

STRENGTH

JENCLAIRESHARES

HEBREWS 11:1 TPT NOW FAITH BRINGS OUR HOPES INTO REALITY AND BECOMES THE FOUNDATION NEEDED TO ACQUIRE THE THINGS WE LONG FOR. IT IS ALL THE EVIDENCE REQUIRED TO PROVE WHAT IS STILL UNSEEN.

I'VE ALWAYS FOUND IT INTERESTING THAT PAUL, THE AUTHOR OF HEBREWS, STARTS THIS CHAPTER THAT TEACHES ON FAITH WITH THE WORD NOW. BUT THE MORE I THINK AND PONDER ON THE WORD, THE MORE I REALISE THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WORD NOW.

IN SOUTH AFRICA, WE HAVE A PHRASE "NOW NOW," WHICH IN MOST OTHER COUNTRIES WOULD MEAN IMMEDIATELY, BUT TO A SOUTH AFRICAN NOW NOW HAS NO REAL TIME CONSTRAINTS – IT COULD BE IMMEDIATELY, IT COULD BE SOMETIME SOON OR LATER – WHO KNOWS.

BUT, PAUL WROTE ABOUT AN IN THE MOMENT FAITH. A FAITH THAT IS SUFFICIENT FOR NOW. WE OFTEN WANT PROVISION FOR THE FUTURE, BUT GOD PROVIDES FOR THE NOW.

THIS APPLIES TO EVERYTHING IN OUR LIVES. GOD PROMISES TO PROVIDE, AND WHEN GOD PROVIDES, HE PROVIDES FOR TODAY.

WE HAVE ALL THE FAITH WE NEED FOR RIGHT NOW.
WE HAVE ALL THE STRENGTH WE NEED FOR RIGHT NOW.
WE HAVE ALL THE JOY WE NEED FOR RIGHT NOW.
WE HAVE ALL THE GRACE WE NEED FOR RIGHT NOW.

SO OFTEN WE WANT PROVISION THAT WILL BE MORE THAN ENOUGH FOR THE FUTURE, BUT WE REALLY ONLY NEED PROVISION FOR THE NOW. GOD WILL GIVE US ALL THAT WE NEED FOR NOW, FOR TODAY. AND TRUTHFULLY, THAT'S ALL WE REALLY NEED. IF WE HAVE ENOUGH FOR TODAY, EVERY DAY, WE WILL NEVER NOT HAVE WHAT WE NEED.

IF WE TRUST THAT NOW FAITH IS ENOUGH. THEN WE DON'T NEED TO THINK ABOUT FUTURE FAITH, BECAUSE OUR FAITH WILL BE ENOUGH FOR EACH DAY.

LET'S TRUST THAT GOD'S PROVISION IS SUFFICIENT FOR THE MOMENT, AND WILL BE ENOUGH IN EVERY MOMENT IN THE FUTURE.

NO OPPORTUNITY IS WASTED WHEN WE LIVE IN THE NOW, IN FACT WHEN WE THINK OF THE WORD NOW, WE CAN READ THE ACRONYM:

NO
OPPORTUNITY
WASTED

LET'S CHOOSE TO LIVE WITH 'NOW FAITH' – NO OPPORTUNITY WASTED
FAITH - BECAUSE NOW FAITH:

1. BRINGS OUR HOPES INTO REALITY
2. BECOMES THE FOUNDATION NEEDED TO ACQUIRE THINGS WE LONG FOR
3. IT'S ALL THE EVIDENCE WE NEED TO PROVE GOD'S EXISTENCE

NOW FAITH IS ENOUGH!

FAITH

JENCLAIRESHARES

IF THERE IS ONE THING THAT I HAVE BEEN TESTED IN, OVER THE YEARS; IT HAS GOT TO BE GRACE.

GRACE IS ONE OF THOSE “CHRISTIANESE” WORDS THAT IS OFTEN JUST USED BY CHRISTIANS TO EXPRESS FORGIVENESS; BUT GRACE IS SO MUCH MORE THAN JUST THAT.

GRACE CAN BE QUITE A COMPLEX CONCEPT BECAUSE GRACE IS NOT ONLY FORGIVENESS, GRACE IS ALSO EQUIPPING AND EMPOWERING. GRACE IS THE ART OF CREATING SPACE TO GROW!

GRACE IS FIRST EXTENDED TO US BY GOD, THROUGH JESUS SACRIFICE ON THE CROSS. THE ULTIMATE ACT OF FORGIVENESS FOR EVERY TIME WE HAVE, AND ARE STILL GOING TO MISS THE MARK OF GOD’S STANDARD OF LIVING. RECEIVING GRACE, MEANS THAT WE ACCEPT THIS GENEROUS GIFT OF FREEDOM FROM GUILT AND WE CHOOSE TO EXTEND THE SAME GENEROUS GIFT TO THOSE AROUND US.

EXTENDING GRACE IS POSSIBLE IF WE HAVE A GENUINE REVELATION OF THE GENEROSITY OF JESUS’ FORGIVENESS. STRUGGLING WITH THIS KIND OF GRACE IS OFTEN BECAUSE WE HAVE NOT FULLY ACKNOWLEDGED HOW MUCH WE ARE FORGIVEN.

GRACE EXTENDED IS ALMOST ALWAYS AN OVERFLOW OF GRACE RECEIVED.

² CORINTHIANS 4:15 TPT YES, ALL THINGS WORK FOR YOUR ENRICHMENT SO THAT MORE OF GOD’S MARVELOUS GRACE WILL SPREAD TO MORE AND MORE PEOPLE, RESULTING IN AN EVEN GREATER INCREASE OF PRAISE TO GOD, BRINGING HIM EVEN MORE GLORY!

GRACE IS NOT FOR OUR GLORY, GRACE [BOTH FORGIVENESS AND EQUIPPING] ARE TO GLORIFY GOD.

WHEN WE RECOGNIZE THAT WE ARE NOT ENOUGH ON OUR OWN, AND THAT WE DESPERATELY NEED GOD’S GRACE TO SUSTAIN US EVERY DAY. REALIZING THAT IF ALL WE HAD WAS GOD’S GRACE THAT, THAT WOULD BE MORE THAN ENOUGH. THAT IS WHEN WE UNDERSTAND THE URGENCY OF EXTENDING GRACE TO OTHERS.

GRACE SHOULD NOT BE LIMITED TO THE ONES WE LOVE, BUT RATHER, TO EVERY PERSON WE MEET.

WE LIVE IN A WORLD WHERE STANDARDS ARE SO HIGH AND WHERE PEOPLE ARE LIKELY TO BE APPREHENSIVE, FOR THE FEAR OF DOING OR SAYING SOMETHING THAT IS OFFENSIVE TO OTHERS.

BUT WE DON’T NEED TO LIVE THIS WAY, WE DON’T NEED TO BE DEFINED BY FAILURE, INSTEAD LET’S SHIFT OUR PERSPECTIVE FROM LOOKING AT THE WORLD THROUGH EYES OF CRITICISM AND SEE THE WORLD THROUGH EYES OF GRACE.

GRACE THAT GIVES SECOND CHANCES - GRACE THAT IS UN-OFFENDABLE BECAUSE WE ARE FORGIVEN, GRACE THAT TEACHES MORE THAN IT CONDEMNS, GRACE THAT NOTICES THE LITTLE INSTEAD OF THE LACK, GRACE THAT SIMPLY SAYS “IT’S OKAY, LET’S GET IT RIGHT NEXT TIME” - IMAGINE A WORLD DEFINED BY THIS GRACE!

GRACE STARTS WITH US, THE FIRST PERSON WE NEED TO EXTEND GRACE TO IS OURSELVES - WE ACCEPT GOD’S GRACE PERSONALLY, AND CONSISTENTLY WORK AT BEING GRACIOUS TOWARDS OURSELVES - GIVING OURSELVES SPACE TO GROW AND TO IMPROVE, AND TO TAKE EACH DAY AS A NEW OPPORTUNITY TO DO BETTER, TO MAKE BETTER CHOICES, AND TO EXTEND MORE GRACE TO OTHERS.

IMAGINE A WORLD WHERE GRACE IS FREELY GIVEN, NO QUESTIONS ASKED, A WORLD WITH LESS COMPETING AND COMPARISON, A WORLD WILLING TO LEARN, FORGIVE, EQUIP AND ULTIMATELY, GLORIFY GOD!

EVERY DETAIL WORKS TO YOUR ADVANTAGE AND TO GOD’S GLORY: MORE AND MORE GRACE, MORE AND MORE PEOPLE, MORE AND MORE PRAISE!

GRACE