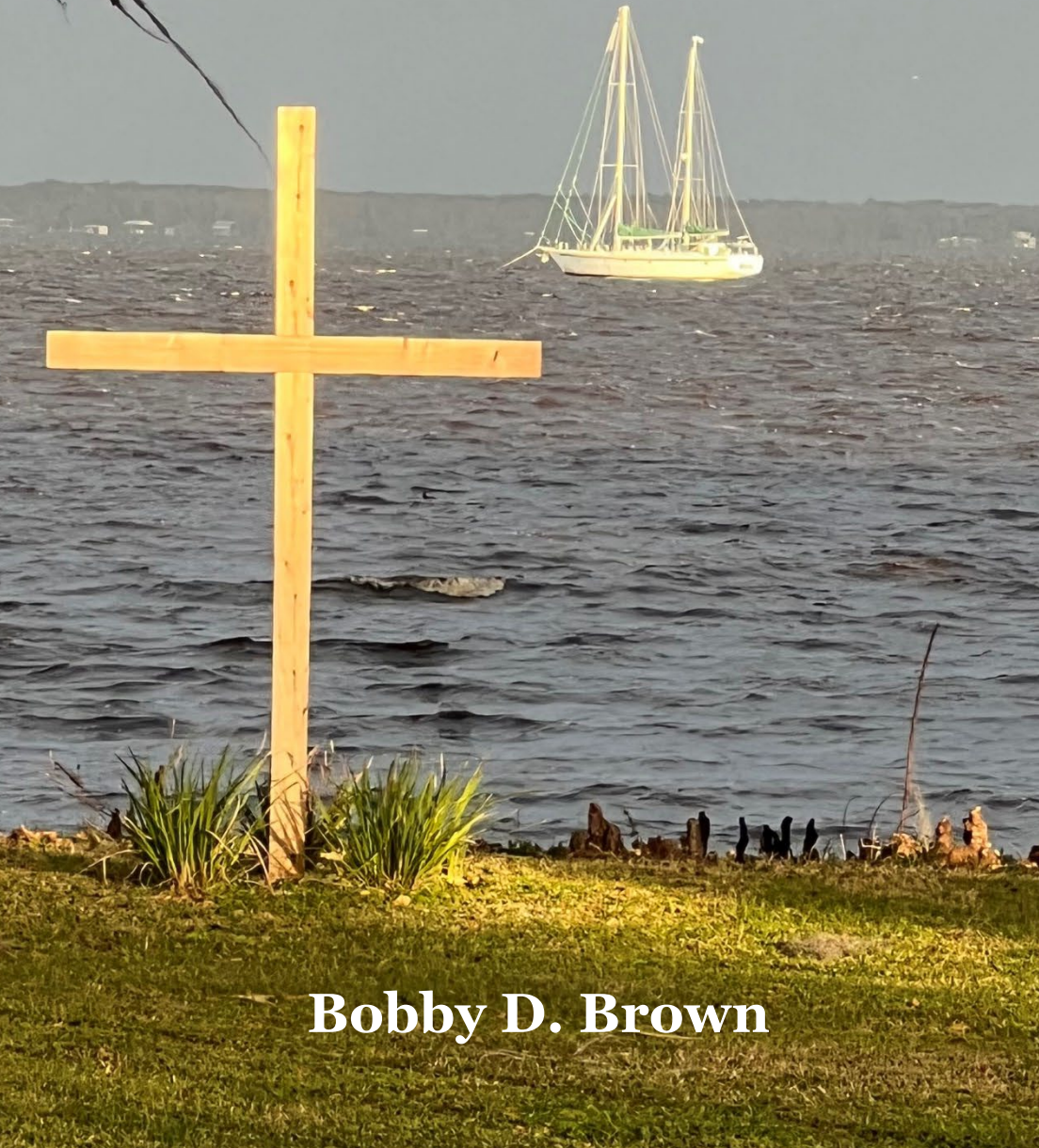


GOD IS GOOD

**Not because of my circumstances but
because of His love**



Bobby D. Brown

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I have attempted to give credit where others have provided the inspiration or content included in this book. Any shortcomings in this area are not intentional and are mine alone.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to John and Jody.

APPRECIATION

Phil and Tammy

Phil, your insight and wisdom is always appreciated. Tammy, thank you for providing your insightful editing skills to this project.

Carolyn

For almost three decades you have stood by me as my friend, confident, biggest fan, and wife. Through the darkest nights and brightest days, you have never given up on me. You make life worth living!

OTHER BOOKS BY THE AUTHOR

Christian Lawyers, A Duty to Seek and Ensure Justice According to Biblical Principles (2013)

A Nation Under Siege (2018)

The End Game (2021)

Stand Your Ground (2021)

Carrying the Cross (2021)

The Index Card (2022)

Hell and Judgment Are Coming (2022)

Forgiven (2022)

Unprepared (2022)

Many of these books are available for free download in PDF format at www.Acts17301.org.

CREDIT WHERE CREDIT BELONGS

All the glory and credit for the inspiration, writing, and publishing of *GOD IS GOOD* belongs to God.

GOD IS GOOD is not intended to be the complete work on the topics of God's goodness, His love, salvation, forgiveness, or Jesus Christ. The Bible is 66 Books, 1,189 Chapters*, 31,103 verses, and 807,361 words, all of which point mankind to Jesus Christ as Lord, Savior, King, Victor and Judge. The Bible does a far better job than I can ever do of explaining Jesus Christ, and in much greater detail.

Test everything against the Word of God.

Bobby D. Brown
Florida, 2023

* Chapter, verse and word count are based on the NASB.

INTRODUCTION

At an early age (about 6 years old) I knew that Jesus Christ was my Savior. Yet I have not always acted like a follower of Jesus Christ. To the contrary, there were times in my life where I hung around the wrong crowd, drank alcohol to excess, bathed in the excess of the world and committed other sins. But, through it all, the Lord kept his hands on my life. Deep down, I knew God was watching over me, not because of who I am or what I had done, but rather because of the blood of Jesus Christ. The Bible teaches that we are saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.¹ However, this does not mean that our lives will not have deep valleys and high mountain tops. Through it all, God is working.

¹ Ephesians 2:8-9. *For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.*

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**Test everything against the Word of
God.**

CHAPTER 1

FACE TO FACE WITH FEAR

Since age 50 I have been undergoing colon cancer screening through a test developed by the Mayo Clinic. At 50 and 54 the tests results came up negative. But on December 1st of 2022 I received a positive test result. Needless to say, I was numb for three days. But I quickly scheduled a colonoscopy for the first available date—I needed to see what was really going on. I was presented with four possibilities: Cancer; Non-cancerous Polyps; Something else (the unknown); or Nothing at all.

I underwent the procedure on December 30, 2022. From all indications the colonoscopy was a success. One large polyp (11 mm) near the entrance of the colon. The doctor was able to remove the polyp. The doctor told me that he has been doing this a while and the polyp looked clean but to be certain the polyp was sent to pathology. Otherwise, everything looked good.

As this good news sank in and I began to tell my family the results I wanted to say “God is good.” But why was God good? Was it because of the results?

Clearly it’s hard to not judge God by our own circumstances. But would God have not been good if the results would have been different? The reality is that God is always good even when circumstances don’t go the way we want.

God doesn’t change because of our circumstances. God is good not because of the results but because of His love.

CHAPTER 2

HUMAN MEASUREMENT

Western Christianity (particularly in America) tends to measure the level of a person's Christianity by how successful we are. We do this based on outward measurements such as cars, jobs, money, fame, home we live in, where we vacation and status in the community. The more successful a person is the more they must be blessed by God. Yet God does not see as people see. God has His own measuring rod.

Scripture teaches that God allows both rain and sunshine to fall on the just and the unjust.¹ Likewise, He uses both the Godly and the ungodly for His purposes.²

¹ Matthew 5:45.

² Genesis 50:20 and Exodus 4:21.

When we live measuring our lives or God Himself based on our own circumstances we miss God's essence; we miss God's goodness.³

God does not change. He was, He is and He will be forever and ever.⁴

In 1 Kings 19 scripture tells the story of Elijah's run from Queen Jezebel who vowed to have Elijah killed because he killed all the priests of Baal. Elijah, who God used to make it rain when the land had suffered a drought for three years,⁵ was now fleeing for his life. Elijah, who God used to demonstrate the nothingness of false gods, was in a race for his life.

Elijah fled deep into the wilderness and was at the end of his ropes. He was finished. Seeing no hope, Elijah asked God to just die. However, God is not limited by our circumstances. God provided an angel to strengthen and feed Elijah. God did not see what

³ A true test of a Christian is a storm; anyone can have faith in calm seas. Matthew 14:22-33.

⁴ Revelation 4:8.

⁵ 1 Kings 17-18.

Elijah saw. God sees with far greater understanding for He is the creator of everything.

When God looks at our earthly successes and failures He sees that which is easily destroyed and taken away by the world.⁶ For as the preacher says:

“Vanity of vanities! All is vanity.” A generation goes and a generation comes, But the earth remains forever.⁷

When God looks at each of us, He looks at our heart.

But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”⁸

⁶ Matthew 6:19-21.

⁷ Ecclesiastes 1:2 and 4. See also 1 John 2:15-17.

⁸ 1 Samuel 16:7.

CHAPTER 3

BRUSHES WITH DEATH

There have been at least 5 times in my life when I should have died or been seriously injured. Through God's grace I am still here.

Appendix Ruptured

When I was a young child I came home early for elementary school with pain in my stomach. My mom, not listening to advice to give me a Tums, took me to the doctor. In the process my appendix ruptured. My survival was in doubt. However, my paternal grandmother and the godly ladies of her Methodist church in Cement, Oklahoma intervened and held a prayer vigil for my recovery.

64½ Mustang Totaled

In 1981, as a high school sophomore I was involved in a violent crash in which I was hit head-on by a drunk driver. I was driving the 64½ Mustang my mother

bought me.⁹ Not wearing the seat belt my head slammed into the car's windshield with such force that I left an indentation in the windshield the shape of my head. The steering wheel lacerated my chin clear through so that my tongue was sticking out through the hole in my chin. In spite of this, I was released from the hospital the same night and was able to go to a beach party the next night with friends.

Motorcycles and Helmets

In 1983, I crashed my motorcycle on the street without wearing a helmet. I spent three (3) days in the hospital. By the grace of God, only my right ear needed to be stitched back together. A small tree limb struck the bone protecting my only good eye and ricocheted away from my vital organs. Any further to the right, and the tree limb would have gone through my eye leaving me blind or worse.

Bridges Don't Move

In 1985, while driving on a country road in the hills outside Oklahoma City, I lost control of my pickup

⁹ Contrary to popular belief. The first year for the Ford Mustang was 64½ not 65. I sure wish I had my blue Mustang.

truck on a very narrow bridge. I crashed into the guard rail knocking it into the ravine below. My truck came to a stop on the precipice of the bridge. If I would have gone any further to the right, I would have plummeted into the rock-filled ravine and water 50 feet below with the guard rail. Or, if the wreck had occurred 10 seconds later, I would have hit an on-coming car full of people on the narrow bridge.

Eighteen-Wheelers are Big

A decade later in 1999, while I was driving to my dad's house in Corpus Christi from a job interview in Victoria, Texas, I started to pull off the highway to help an elderly couple that looked to be in distress. However, I ended up being the one in distress. I was rear-ended by an eighteen-wheeler. The pickup truck I was driving spun out of control, rolled over several times crashing through a barbed wire fence before resting on its side in a cow pasture. I was told by the paramedics who treated me that most people who are hit by an eighteen-wheeler on the highway don't make it. Because the rescue crew expected the worst Life-flight was called to the scene. I went to the hospital by ambulance instead. By the grace of God, I was released from the hospital the same night after

having 14 staples placed in my head. I ended up with a few hidden scars and a story to tell.

Looking back at each of these events in my life, I played a part in some and others not so much.

Appendix Rupture. Not much influence a child has over their appendix rupturing.

Totaling my Mustang in high school (Go Tigers). I was headed to a party where I would have likely been drinking. However, I did not consume any beer or alcohol (or other substance) when the accident occurred. Maybe I should have just stayed home that night? In reality I had no influence over the other driver and seat belts were not a thing we did in 1981.

The motorcycle crash in 1983 was influenced by my actions. I made a choice and I chose poorly. Clearly I should have been wearing my helmet. I significantly contributed to my circumstances.

The 1985 encounter with the bridge was my fault. I executed a “California stop” (rolled through the stop sign) about 100 feet from the entrance to the bridge. Then, having cleared the stop sign, I gunned it (hit the gas pedal hard). The events and circumstances which unfolded were my fault.

Clearly, I was not paying attention during the decade of the 80’s. But the Lord did not stop pursuing me.

I have looked back at the 1999 incident many times. This is where God and I got reacquainted. This is where God got my attention. I was not speeding or driving recklessly. I noticed a couple I thought needed help parked on the right shoulder of the highway. I was in the right lane. I looked behind me to see if other vehicles were close to me. I used my turn signal to indicate I was pulling off to the side of the road. I slowed down and started to make a controlled lane change. Yet I did not see the eighteen-wheeler that was coming from the overpass that I had driven over minutes before. The truck driver did not see me. I am grateful to be alive but more important

than being alive I am eternally grateful that the Lord did not stop trying to get my attention.

Was God good because I did not die or because I was not more seriously injured as a result of these brushes with death? Should I blame God because He did not do more to protect me?

As a very young child (baby) I was rushed to the hospital on numerous occasions with a very high fever. The solution, hold me down in a tub of ice water. My mom had to repeat this at home on other occasions as well.¹⁰ How many times is God supposed to intervene in our lives?

Who am I to tell the Creator of everything that has ever been created what is good or bad.¹¹ He's God! The point is that God is ultimately in control not you or me.

¹⁰ I was born at Camp Lejeune, N.C. at the Navy Hospital. Did the water there play a role in my childhood illnesses? Perhaps. But my father was a proud Marine and I am proud to be the son of a Marine.

¹¹ Genesis 1:1-31; Job 21:22; Job 38-42:6; and John 1:1-3.

CHAPTER 4

THIRTY DAYS IN DECEMBER

For 30 days I lived with a cancer diagnosis hanging over my head. But what is kind of amusing is that once the IV was in my arm and I was in the bed waiting my turn to go into the operating room (before drugs were started) I finally had peace from God and knew everything was going to be okay.

During these 30 days I never tried to bargain or cut a deal with God. I never begged for my life. From day one I knew whatever happened God was in control.

However, I am not ashamed to admit that during this time I lived in a kind of fog, walking through life somewhat absent minded unless concentrating on the task at hand.

During this time, I visited with my mom, my daughters, son-in-laws, and grandsons. I

wanted to see them all before I went in for the colonoscopy.

I did not realize until midway through the month of December that I was scared. Early in the morning on December 20th, alone in my pickup truck on my way to the airport, I cried out to God “*I don’t want to die*”. I was scared. What would my family would do without me? What would be my legacy? (I know, kind of silly worrying about a legacy when most of us are only one or two generations away from being forgotten after we die). I was scared about what I had not yet done in life.

Knowing everything is in my Creator’s hands did not stop me from being human. I wanted to live; to spend time, as much time as I can with Carolyn; enjoy family; see my great grandchildren who are not even born yet graduate from high school. I want to make a difference.

On January 13, 2023, I learned that the polyp was benign (non-cancerous).

My prayer which started in December and continues today is: *“God, whatever You want me to learn from this experience please don’t let me forget it afterwards.”*

CHAPTER 5

GOD'S NOT DONE (WITH YOU)

Waking up Saturday morning December 31, 2022, I was ready to get out of the house and take care of some Saturday morning errands before I settled in for a whole day of college football bowl games.

The day was going great until about 2:00 p.m. when my stomach began to hurt. Fighting through the night, I resisted the need to go to the hospital. However, by 6:30 a.m. the following morning (Sunday January 1), I was in the emergency room.

About nine hours later after several tests, morphine, and other pain medications a decision was made to admit me to the hospital and prepare for surgery.

After complications and delays I successfully underwent surgery at about 1:00 p.m. the next day (Monday January 2, 2023), for a blocked gallbladder. The surgical team also checked to be sure that I did

not suffer any complications from the colonoscopy. My liver was also tested for cancer (it was negative).

What's the lesson from my start of 2023? At this stage of my life, I am not sure that I understand the totality of the lesson(s) I am to take away from this experience. I do believe God is answering my prayer to not forget what I learned over the previous 30 days.

Through these experiences I am reminded that when we walk surrendered to God He keeps His hands on our lives even when we don't understand what is happening.¹²

¹² Genesis 50:20; Romans 8:28.

CHAPTER 6

YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES DO NOT DETERMINE GOD'S LOVE FOR YOU

I don't know your circumstances -- good/bad, joy/sadness or somewhere in between. Regardless of what you are facing today or have been through in the past, God is good. His love does not change.

Every one of us at some point in our lives has rejected God, disregarded His law, turned our backs on His instructions or denied even knowing Him. That's ok, Moses did it¹³; David did it¹⁴; Peter did it¹⁵; and so have you and I.¹⁶ Yet God loves the world so much that He sacrificed His Son on a wooden cross to reconcile the world back to Himself.

¹³ Numbers 20:8-12.

¹⁴ 2 Samuel 12:1-15.

¹⁵ Mark 14.

¹⁶ All have fallen short of the glory of God. Romans 3:22-24.

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.¹⁷

While the world is ruled and tormented by Satan and his minions, Jesus Christ has already defeated Satan. Through Christ's resurrection we too can have eternal life with Him today and in heaven. Yet believing that Jesus Christ is the Son of God is not enough, demons believe and are not saved. We must believe in (trust, surrender to, be certain of) Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. Turning to Him and away from our sins.

Far too many in the Church are living in fear not faith. Faith says whatever happens today, God is in control. Fear worries about controlling the events and outcomes of the day. Fear worries about maintaining our life, wealth, status, and comfort.

Faith walks out of the house each day surrendered of self, surrendered to Christ's calling for that very day,

¹⁷ John 3:16.

hour, and minute. Christian faith focuses on Jesus Christ. Fear focuses on earthly wants, needs, and desires. Faith comes from Christ. Fear comes from Satan.

Millions of people in America and around the world are so afraid of dying that they have stopped living. They want you and me to live in that same fear.

Each of us must ask: “Am I surrendered to Christ or fear?” Fear asks “what if?” Faith says “even if.”¹⁸

Fear = What if

Faith = Even if

¹⁸ Vance, thank you for the illustration.

CHAPTER 7

GOD'S GOODNESS REQUIRES A DECISION

God's goodness requires a decision.¹⁹ I urge you to not regard this book as implying that a person can walk through this life without Jesus and then walk into eternity with Him. We cannot. Jesus Christ is a two-for-one package. Surrendering to Jesus as Lord and Savior brings us into a personal relationship with the Creator of the world in both this life and for eternity.

Because God is good He must judge each of us on the totality of our lives. As a result of this judgement, we are all doomed to eternity in hell unless *Someone* else has paid the price for our sins.²⁰

Because of this God does not hide the path to a relationship with Him. He wants a relationship with

¹⁹ Acts 17:30-31.

²⁰ Isaiah 53:5; Romans 3:23; Romans 6:23; and John 1:12.

you and me. The key is Jesus Christ.²¹ Christ came to earth to free mankind from Satan.

Jesus Christ is the only acceptable payment for our sins against God.²² He paid the price on a wooden cross so that we could be free from death.²³

When we believe in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior He covers our failings with His blood.²⁴ He cleanses us and God remembers our sins no more.²⁵

Belief does not guarantee or promise an easy life. Instead, God promises to take the walk with us if we are His.²⁶ Do not trust on your own understanding but in all things trust on the Lord.²⁷

²¹ Jesus Christ is the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to God but through the Son, Jesus Christ. John 14:6.

²² Romans 5; Hebrews 9:13-14; John 14:6; 2 Corinthians 5:21.

²³ 1 Peter 2:24; John 3:16; Hebrews 2:14; 1 Corinthians 15:50-58; 2 Timothy 1:10; and Galatians 3:13-14.

²⁴ 1 Peter 2:24; 1 John 1:7-9; and Ephesians 1:7.

²⁵ 1 John 1:19; Acts 3:19; Hebrews 8:12; and Psalm 103:12.

²⁶ He will never leave you or forsake you. Deuteronomy 31:8; Matthew 28:20.

²⁷ Proverbs 3.

If you want to surrender your life to Jesus Christ do it. *“Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame.”*²⁸

Here is a prayer you can follow. You don’t have to use these exact words, what matters is what is in the depth of your soul (heart):

*Dear God, I am a sinner. Please forgive me of my sins. I reject the sinful path I am on and I surrender to Jesus Christ, the resurrected living Son of God, as the Lord and Savior of my life. Amen.*²⁹

If you prayed this prayer or something similar, welcome to the family. I encourage you to:

- Tell Someone
- Get Baptized
- Study the Bible
- Join a Christ Centered Church

²⁸ Romans 10:11.

²⁹ How do we know we are saved? We take God at His word and we act upon it. Luke 6:46-49; John 14:15; and 1 John 2:15-17.

CHAPTER 8

LOVE OTHERS WHILE YOU ARE IN YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES

Every interaction you have with another person is helping lead that person to one place or the other.³⁰ Live today like someone else's eternity depends on it.

What are you going through? Maybe the person working in the cubicle or office next to you or riding in the bus seat next to you is going through the same thing or perhaps even something worse. You never know what someone else is going through. Maybe you have already faced what a friend, neighbor or the person next to you is going through now.

When I received the notice of a positive colon cancer screening test I reached out to my Saturday morning

³⁰ In watching *The Life and Faith of CS Lewis*, I was struck to the core to think that every interaction I have with someone could be leading them to heaven or hell. I realized instantly that these are words of truth.

prayer group. More than one member of our small Saturday morning group has been where I was. My opening up to these Christian brothers allowed them to minister to me with love, compassion and humor.

There is a man I know, a man I admire and who inspires me to focus on others instead of my circumstances. I will not tell his story because it is his to tell or not tell. What I will pass along to you is that though this man of faith faces his own mortality on a reoccurring basis he never complains. Instead, he focuses on others. This man quietly spends his time and resources seeking to help others who are hurting, particularly veterans.

I was reminded of the power of helping others while watching an interview of a legendary rodeo cowboy on the Cowboy Channel in early 2023. The cowboy was asked about dealing with tragedy. The tragedy he faced many years before has destroyed many a man (and woman). His response was something to this effect, he could take the easy way out with drugs or

alcohol or he could choose every day to be happy.³¹ He chooses to be happy every day helping others.

This cowboy's remarks really pulled me up short. How many times have I been put-out because I was cut off in traffic; the line was too slow at the grocery store; or some other trivial matter? How many days of my life have I lived consumed by melancholy because life was not going like I thought it should?

I have found time and time again that when my back is against the wall, when life is more than I believe I can handle that if I will spend more time praying for other people than myself my spirit is lifted, my hope renewed and my faith strengthened.³² Being a light for someone else has the overwhelming tendency to brighten my own life.

³¹ *"Even though the fig trees are all destroyed, and there is neither blossom left nor fruit; though the olive crops all fail, and the fields lie barren; even if the flocks die in the fields and the cattle barns are empty, yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will be happy in the God of my salvation."* Habakkuk 3:17-18, The Living Bible (TLB) copyright © 1971 by Tyndale Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers Inc., Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved.

³² *"Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much."* James 5:16.

Be the light that someone else needs.³³

Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’ ‘The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’”³⁴

Don't be so wrapped up in your troubles that you miss an opportunity to be a light in the darkness for someone else. Sometimes it's as simple as a smile, a hello, holding a door open, being kind

³³ Matthew 25:31-46; and Luke 10:25-37.

³⁴ Matthew 25:37-40.

EPILOGUE

Do not allow your past to define your now or your tomorrow. God loves you.³⁵

*Do not call to mind the former things, Or
ponder things of the past.*

*Behold, I will do something new, Now it
will spring forth; Will you not be aware
of it? I will even make a roadway in the
wilderness, Rivers in the desert.*

*The beasts of the field will glorify Me,
The jackals and the ostriches, Because I
have given waters in the wilderness And
rivers in the desert, To give drink to My
chosen people.*

*The people whom I formed for Myself
Will declare My praise.*

Isiah 43:18-21

³⁵ Thank you Rick for the inspiration to use this Bible verse.

*For God so loved the world, that He
gave His only begotten Son, that
whoever believes in Him shall not
perish, but have eternal life.*

John 3:16



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