



Stop
Trying

and
Start
Trusting

you got it right

STOP TRYING AND START TRUSTING

YOU GOT IT RIGHT THE FIRST TIME.

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A NEW LEVEL OF FREEDOM from
condemnation.

THIS BOOK IS designed to build and
release your faith.

AND DELIVER YOU FROM THE THOUGHTS
AND FEELINGS THAT SAY YOU ARE NOT
GOOD ENOUGH.

THE LIE STOPS HERE!

YOU ARE GOOD ENOUGH.

Introduction.

I have always acknowledged this:

“The smartest thing that you can ever do in your life is to love someone.”

1 Corinthians 1:19b-20

“the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate.”

Where is the wise man?

Where is the scholar?

Where is the philosopher of this age?

The bible talks to the smartest people on earth and tells them, if they are not loving... then they are not smart.

1 Corinthians 13:13” *but the greatest of these is love.”*

We need to argue that Jesus is good enough and he has done enough.

Then we need to declare: when we believed in Jesus we did all that we ever needed to do.

The smartest thing a human being can do on this planet is to believe in Jesus and receive him into their heart.

You are now the smartest person, because to believe in someone is to love them.

Yes, when you believe in someone you are loving them. When you believed in Jesus, you loved him.

The experience of becoming a Christian is the highlight of a person's life story.

Chapter 1

Whenever the Olympics are on... the television stations and other media outlets in Australia always interview our sporting legends from past Olympics.

One of our greatest sporting personalities is always one of the main attractions. This person is treated with respect and often given a place of honour at media events or sporting receptions.

Now let me be a little honest with you. This sporting champion achieved their success over 40 years ago. Since then this person has had a very unremarkable life. They have not had any success in any other area of their life for over 40 years.

Some would say that they have actually been unsuccessful.

I am happy that we treat our past sporting champions with honour and respect.

What I find interesting is... you can get it right so long ago and still be blessed today from something that happened in your past.

If you have a happy marriage, you are being blessed today from a decision that you made at a previous time. If you are in a prosperous business or career, it is the same.

I am going to take you back to the day you decided to believe in Jesus. I am going to make the argument that you should still be receiving honour and blessing because of all the wonderful implications of that

decision. A spring of life opened up on that day and it is still flowing into your life.

But guess what? This spring or fountain can become blocked.

The great thing about the way the media treats our sporting stars when the Olympics are on is they only focus on what the person got right. The journalists forget about the mistakes that may have happened in the personal life of the champion that they are interviewing or writing about.

Everyone's complete focus is on the one time this person got it right and won their sporting event.

They got a gold medal and all the glory

that comes from winning an Olympic gold medal.

The winter Olympics have just been held in Russia.

One of our young snowboarder's was telling a journalist how helpful a gold medal is for opening doors.

Apparently, a group of contestants was out late one-night celebrating. They were hungry and found a restaurant just after it closed. The young people pleaded through the window for the manager to let them in, but he would not. Now they were cold and hungry.

This Australian woman who had just won a gold medal took it out of her pocket and placed it against the window. The manager immediately opened the

restaurant just for this group of winners. Everyone loves a winner.

When you became a Christian; you made a decision that many other people cannot or will not make. You were asked a version of this question:

” Is Jesus the Son of God, was he raised from the dead, will you accept him as Lord and Saviour?”

Many people know the right answer to this question but make the wrong decision. They say, “NO.”

For most of us this was a really simple question with a simple answer. We said, “Yes.”

When you think back to the day that you gave this right answer did you put a value on your response?

Because God gives us salvation as a gift; we say that we did nothing. Compared to what Jesus did...yes, we did nothing to earn our salvation, so we cannot boast.

But let us compare ourselves with ourselves.

Of all the decisions you have made in your life, which one was the most important.

Now if we put a value on all your decisions and asked you which ones were gold, silver or bronze?

What value would you give your salvation decision? You would have to say it was Olympic Gold!!

Therefore, all your other decisions that you ever make must be valued with silver or bronze. Your salvation decision was your Mount Everest moment.

You climbed the highest mountain and at the very top you met with God and said yes.

How clever are you?

You can never undo that decision...you can never exceed that choice.

It is the best thing you have ever done.

It was courageous. It was intelligent.

It was wisdom at its best.

You are more than an Olympic champion.

You are more than a Noble Laureate. You are a hero.

Now do not get all modest with me.

Remember I am comparing your decision to say yes with what would have happened if you had said no.

If you had said no, that would have been unwise and cowardly. It would have been

uninspiring. You would have turned your back on your Father and the sacrifice of his son.

Let me be clear...it would have been the worst choice you would have ever made. It would have been the worst day of your life.

So now you can see why I am celebrating with you about your “GOLD MEDAL,” salvation decision.

Congratulations you got it right the first time.

Chapter 2

*Then God brought Abram outside beneath the night sky and told him,
“Look up into the heavens and count the stars if you can. Your descendants will be like that—too many to count!”
And Abram believed God;
then God considered him righteous on account of his faith.*

Genesis 15:4-6

This conversation God had with Abraham was pivotal. Before this, God had been talking with Abraham and blessing him. God had directed Abraham's steps and Abraham had obeyed.

But on this very special night God was going to make a statement that was hard to believe.

[Look up into the heavens and count the stars if you can. Your descendants will be like that—too many to count!]

Here was a choice that would determine Abraham's future.

It was tempting to doubt and question. What God was promising was humanly impossible.

Why was this so important?

Abraham had been making all the right decisions and saying all the right things.

Why didn't God just say?

"I accept you as righteous because you left your land and followed me."

Because God wanted to test Abraham in a different way. God told him to believe the

impossible.

And when Abraham believed what God said was true, God declared that not only did Abraham get the answer right.

God took this moment and marked it in history.

Even though Abraham had many conversations and made many excellent decisions when he was talking and walking with God...

this was the one decision that God was going to make a big deal about because he was going to build the whole New Agreement on it.

God can decide what he wants. And he wanted to make this moment special in his relationship with Abraham and his future spiritual children.

The only thing that Abraham did on that night at that moment was to believe.

God's response was to accept Abraham as righteous; based on one decision that Abraham made once.

He only believed that one thing; at that one particular point in time.

When we get saved and learn to take on our new Christian lifestyle, we have to make a lot of decisions along the way. Life can be tough for a new Christian and we may end up disappointing ourselves and those around us. Or we may be disappointed with God and his promises. We can be burdened by wrong choices and or wrong results.

Let us go back to the example of the Olympic gold medallist. The Olympics only come around every 4 years. Maybe in

between Olympics the champion is ignored or forgotten. Their life could be a little grey. Their face downcast.

One of my customers is a gold medallist from the Sydney Olympics. Her life has been a bit of a mess since then. But whenever I mention her gold medal, her face lights up, she gets a glow about her and the atmosphere changes for the better.

I saw her recently; things have been working out for her. Even when you see her in a group of family or friends it appears that even in the hard times there is something different about the way she carries herself. There is something that is regal; you could call it the gold medal effect.

People cannot deny... that at some point in time this person crossed into a realm that most of us will never experience. Or will we?

Or more importantly... have we?

Was there a point in history that you marked out as your own gold medal moment?

Yes, there was a time when you got it right.

God asked you to believe the impossible. To believe, all your sins could be forgiven, to believe you could become a brand-new person. He asked you to believe before you could see.

He was asking you to believe things that were humanly impossible, that were beyond not only your abilities but beyond

everyone else's ability. There was no organisation, no program, and no machine that could give you a brand-new heart.

And make you clean on the inside or free you from your addictions.

Though all this appeared impossible, you said, "yes".

When we accept Gods invitation to be saved, we often do so with little knowledge of how important this decision is.

Well then, that means you may have got it right in ignorance.

Isn't that special...getting something right in ignorance? That's not normal.

Don't we normally get things wrong in ignorance?

Olympians do not always win by their own efforts.

In Australia there is a famous winter Olympian who won his gold medal in ice-skating because all the other competitors fell over in the finals.

He was coming last, and then he was first. I heard him on the radio telling some school children how to be successful. We do not take his medal away because he had a little help.

Like he says, "you have to be in it to win it".

You might be thinking...well, God did it all, how can I celebrate my decision? Yes... God did it all.

But he left you a part to play. He could do everything, except believe for you. He

believed in you, but he could not believe on your behalf.

This is a true story that I read about a young lady from America, who lost custody of her 3 year old son.

This young single mother [she was separated from her husband] was raising her child with love and affection. Her mother had been murdered when she was 10 years old. She knew what it was like to grow up without a mother's love.

Because of her own bad experience, she was doing her best to provide a home that was full of a mother's love. Unknown to her, the mother-in-law was organising a court case against her to win custody of the child, so that she could raise this little boy.

Her mother-in-law was a dominating personality and wanted total custody. The mother-in-law hired a lawyer and they went to court to charge this young mother with being an unfit parent. They lied about the conditions in the house and lied about this young lady's personal life.

Because this young lady had no warning about this court case, she arrived in court without a lawyer and was in a distressed emotional state, which did not help her case at all. The judge handed over custody to the father of the child and the mother-in-law.

It took this young mother 3 months to build a legal case to prove she was a fit person and a good mother.

In the end the judge could see that the mother-in-law had been making false accusations. The young mother won the court case and therefore custody of her son!

The difficulty this young mother had in preparing her case was the fact that she could not point to one particular incident to prove her case. That she was a good parent.

She had to do many things, such as spending time with child welfare officials. Having people inspect her home. She also had to keep a diary of her dealings with her mother-in-law. Such as phone calls and emails.

It would have been so much easier if she could have based her case on a moment

in time. Normally we have to prove our argument by outlining a whole series of events.

Let's go back to Abraham's situation. He had a very good relationship with God. Things were going well. Why did God select one response that Abraham made to God's statement and use it as the foundation for our faith.

Abram believed God; then God considered him righteous on account of his faith.

Genesis 15:5-6

For us to be saved, God had to design a way that was fair for all. It also had to be very simple so that nobody would have an advantage or disadvantage because of their intellect.

In fact, your mind can sometimes put you at a disadvantage because the act of believing in someone you cannot see, or in a promise that is impossible... is not easy. We need God's grace to help us believe.

The judgment followed one sin.

Romans 5:16

You can see from this verse that we all suffered from one sin that one person did at one particular time. Adam and Eve only got one thing wrong, it just happened to be the one thing that God had decided was a non-negotiable.

Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted

in justification and life for all people.

Romans 5:18

In this scripture we see that God is a God of balance. Sin, sickness and death came into our lives by one wrong action. It is only fair that these things are removed from our lives by one right action.

The action of the cross of Christ.

Now you can see why God would base your salvation on one moment of right believing.

You are saved by one decision that you made once.

It really was a gold medal moment!

He designed something that you only had to get right once. Now it is done, congratulations.

At your salvation moment God accepted you as a son or daughter. He blessed you with every blessing.

He removed the curse from your life. He forgave you all your sins.

He transferred everything you will ever need over to you. You crossed out of debt into credit.

That decision of yours is now frozen in time. It cannot be undone and no-one can deny that you did it.

The accuser may come and tell you...you are an unfit person to be a Christian.

People may accuse you of many different faults and shortcomings. You may even get to the point where you... self-sabotage.

But remember how to argue your case.

Just point back to the time when you got one thing right once.

You believed in Jesus. And you can say together with him, "It is finished."

God has now declared that you are right with him and you are now righteous forever.

The gospel is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: "The righteous will live by faith."

Romans 1:16-17

We are not like that young mother. It took her a long time and a lot of effort to prove that she was a fit person. She had to accumulate a whole history of good deeds to convince the court. But we only have to mention something that we did once. How easy is that?

We believed. It is done. That settles it.

Chapter 3

We live in a world where one opportunity can change your life forever. At the opposite end we know that one wrong incident can also change your life forever.

“So, Joseph naturally became quite a favourite with him. Soon he was put in charge of the administration of Potiphar’s household, and all of his business affairs. At once the Lord began blessing Potiphar for Joseph’s sake. All his household affairs began to run smoothly, his crops flourished and his flocks multiplied.”

Genesis 39:4

Wasn’t Joseph having a great time?
Until it all collapsed. He was in the wrong

place at the wrong time...with the wrong woman.

In Joseph's story we understand that he suffered from a woman's false accusation and spent time in jail.

But we also know that God organised a corresponding set of circumstances that led to him being promoted; just because he interpreted a dream correctly.

Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has made all this known to you, there is no one so discerning and wise as you. You shall be in charge of my palace, and all my people are to submit to your orders. Only with respect to the throne will I be greater than you."

Genesis 41:39

Adam and Eve did the wrong thing and God responded by sending his son to do the right thing.

The old agreement didn't even work. If it had, there would have been no need for another to replace it. Hebrews 8:6-7

The old agreement did not work because you had to get everything right every time. You had to obey a lot of rules. You had to do many things; many times.

Nor did he enter heaven to offer himself again and again.

Hebrews 9:25

Under the old system you had to do things again and again. Repetition was the key.

But he has appeared once.

Hebrews 9:26

Christ was sacrificed once.

Hebrews 9:28

The key to the new agreement is to do it once.

That is why your salvation depends on one decision that you made once.

The sacrifices under the old system were repeated again and again, year after year, but even so they could never save those who lived under their rules.

If they could have, one offering would have been enough; the worshipers would have been cleansed once for all and their feeling of guilt would be gone.

But just the opposite happened.

Hebrews 10:1-3

Adam and Eve got it wrong once and Jesus got it right once.

Joseph innocently got it wrong once and then he got it right once. The same door that opened for him to go into prison was the same door that opened for him to get out of prison. He lost the favour of his old boss and then he gained the favour of his new boss.

Your old boss was the law that came from Moses and your new boss is the grace that comes through Jesus.

We get into trouble because of unbelief or believing a lie and we get out of trouble by believing the truth.

The lie is... that repetition will fix the situation and the truth is that something

that happened once has already fixed the situation.

This one thing is the cross and our one response is to believe that the cross fixed everything once, at one point in time.

Because of the cross we are changed.

Because of the cross we are helped.

Because of the cross we are in Gods favour. And all this became ours when we believed and were saved.

For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

1 Corinthians 1:18

The message itself carries the power to change and deliver us.

Repetition cannot save and does not carry the power. An event that happened once carries the power.

Our believing in that one event completes the circuit. We all believed in the cross when we were saved whether we realised it at the time or just said, "Yes."

When our believing lines up our face lights up.

We often have bushfires here in Australia. A couple of years ago the state of Victoria had one of their worst bushfires ever. Electricity wires were blamed for part of the blaze.

But the authorities also caught and charged a man who was thought to be responsible for one of the fires.

*Consider what a great forest is set on fire
by a small spark.*

James 3:5

This man used a cigarette lighter to start the fire he was responsible for. He did nothing more. That is all that he did. But it was enough. Many people lost their lives. Others lost their houses. That is the power of a wrong decision followed by a wrong action.

Adam and Eve lit a fire called sin.

Can you imagine the destruction that has happened since? Now ponder this...God already had a plan.

And that plan had no limits on who it would help, or how much it would help. The concept of limitless provision is foreign to our thinking.

When the Victorian Government started to organise help for the victims of the fire, they did their best. But whenever you watch the government in action you realise that maybe what they say and what they do; might not match up.

The most encouraging thing that comes out of these situations is the community spirit of giving.

People go out of their way to help their neighbours.

Our value systems and core beliefs get shaken.

What was important to us one day can be unimportant the next.

Here is a story of one man's survival.

On Black Saturday, things started to look bad so my daughter-in-law Lee left early with the baby and two dogs while my son

stayed to try and protect the house and pets.

When the wind changed, he put all the animals except the horses and chooks in his car. He cut the fences to give the horses their best chance and let the chooks out of their shed.

As he was hosing the house, he saw the flames coming towards him. He jumped in his car and started to try and out run the fire. The road was blocked, so he had to drive through paddocks, smashing through fence after fence.

He nearly got bogged in a creek bed but found a way out.

He drove blind for about 10 kilometres until he found a road which he followed until he found a dam.

He collected all the pets: he put the goats

in the dam on their leads and placed the cats and the ferrets in their cages on the edge of the dam half in- half out and covered them all with a blanket.

Minutes later the fire went right over their heads.

After a couple of hours of sitting in the dam and sharing it with about twenty kangaroos, he was found by chance by the CFA.

They took him back to the fire station where he had to stay up all night helping the firemen defend the station.

We finally heard from him at 5:30am on Sunday morning.

Unfortunately, they have lost their home and the horses died. They found three chooks still alive and amazingly the chook shed was still standing with five eggs in the nest.

Everything else has gone. I can only thank God my son is alive but I grieve the loss of their horses, their home and mostly their dream of living in the country with their beloved pets.

They had only been there for four months and were just starting to enjoy their new life.

All I can say is, my son is my hero.

Pam.

This man took all the limits of his thinking and proceeded to do whatever needed to be done to survive.

Not only thinking about his family's safety but the safety of the animals. This was his gold medal moment and we honour him for it.

His family and especially his mother will

never think of him without remembering the actions he took on this fateful day.

We see one man destroying lives and another man helping to save them.

Which one would you like to meet if you needed assistance? That is what happened to you on the day of your salvation.

You were introduced to the Son of God himself.

What a great day that was.

And from that day on he has been helping and assisting you. At times you are aware of that help and at other times it is behind the scenes.

What a high value decision you made when you decided to accept Gods offer of salvation.

Didn't you do well to choose to go his

way?

Remember that day and give it the value that it deserves. You met your true hero!

And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."

Matthew 3:17

Chapter 4

Please notice that when you write your “Will” ... and you declare in that “Will” how your money and property is to be divided up. What you say is what the lawyer has to do. It is a legal document. You are in a position of power and everyone has to play by your rules. If you write in your “Will” that certain people are the ones who are going to get your money...then that is what is going to happen.

*In the case of a will, it is necessary to prove the death of the one who made it, because a will is in force only when somebody has died;
it never takes effect while the one who*

made it is living.

Hebrews 9:16-17

When Jesus died, he gave all he had to you.

And he only made one rule for you to receive your inheritance. Here is the one rule.

If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Romans 10:9

Jesus set the rules to make it simple.

When you change the rules, you change the atmosphere. He made it easy for us to inherit the blessing.

So those who rely on faith are blessed.

Galatians 3:7

Now here is the key. When you believed the first time is when you were blessed. The exchange happened on the day of your salvation. You are blessed because of something that you did then not something you are doing now.

Christ redeemed us from the curse.

Galatians 3:13

On the day of your salvation you were also set free from the curse. You do not have to do something today to be set free from the curse.

It has already happened.

It happened on the day you were born again.

Now you can see what a great day that

was.

And you can understand why it was a
“gold medal” decision.

Of all the decisions you have made, which
one was the most important? Which one
has affected your life for eternity?

*“You did not recognize the time of God’s
coming to you.”*

Luke 19:44

Here is a bible example of one person
getting one thing right.

*As Jesus and the disciples continued on
their way to Jerusalem they came to a
village where a woman named Martha
welcomed them into her home.*

*Her sister Mary sat on the floor, listening
to Jesus as he talked.*

But Martha was the jittery type and was

worrying over the big dinner she was preparing.

She came to Jesus and said, “Sir, doesn’t it seem unfair to you that my sister just sits here while I do all the work?

Tell her to come and help me.”

But the Lord said to her, “Martha, dear friend, you are so upset over all these details!

There is really only one thing worth being concerned about.

Mary has discovered it—and I won’t take it away from her! “

Luke 10:38-42

This is the problem with people doing no work to earn their salvation.

Yes, it is unfair.

We live in a world where you get rewarded for what you do and how well

you do it.

The world system we operate in; rewards good behaviour and punishes bad behaviour.

If I had been in the room with Jesus, I would have agreed with Martha. I would have been looking forward to a good meal. Probably not many people would have thought Mary was making a good choice.

Thank goodness Jesus came to the rescue. Jesus said that Mary made the right decision.

He said, *“There is really only one thing worth being concerned about.*

Mary has discovered it—and I won’t take it away from her! “

Did you hear that? There is only one thing to worry about.

And for us that is...did you accept Gods offer of salvation?

If you did, what are you worried about?

I thought Martha had a good argument when she complained about Mary. But apparently, I was wrong and Jesus was right.

Chapter 5

You may be wondering why I am making such an effort to promote the decision that we made on the day of our salvation. Like Martha... we have to stop what we are doing and turn our ear to what Jesus is saying.

God has opened up the Word and turned our attention back to what He has really given us and every other believer on that very special day of salvation.

For some people their salvation seems progressive and happens over a season in time, but it really all emanates from a moment in time.

Now you can understand that I have been like Martha by trusting in my own efforts and now I am like Mary.

Now I trust in his efforts!

It seems to me that the reason self-effort starts out so well but does not continue; is because the grace we need does not keep flowing.

We get our eyes off what happened at the moment of our salvation onto what is happening to us at this moment.

In this story we see Moses getting the people healed by changing what they are looking at and focusing on.

*Then the Lord told him,
"Make a bronze replica of one of these snakes and attach it to the top of a pole; anyone who is bitten shall live if he simply looks at it!" So, Moses made the replica,*

and whenever anyone who had been bitten looked at the bronze snake, he recovered!

Numbers 21:8-9

These people were healed by looking at something that was outside their immediate vicinity. They looked at something that was in the distance. For a lot of us, our salvation is many years behind us.

But it can still be relevant to us today. If there are things that are biting us today like condemnation, we can lift up our eyes and look back at our salvation experience and realise that the solution to our present problem was given to us at an earlier point of time.

The grace that we need now was given to us back then.

How much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ!

Romans 5:17

This scripture tells us that we got an abundant provision of grace on the same day that we received the gift of righteousness. The next scripture shows us what happens when you have an abundance of grace.

And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, you may have all that you need so that you will abound in every situation.

2 Corinthians 9:8

Jessica Watson is a young Australian girl who sailed around the world solo. Her mother prepared all her food. This is Jessica writing in her journal.

“Food is another big thing that I get a lot of questions about, so here goes; It was definitely a bit of a mission and Mum has done an amazing job of putting together a tasty menu that will last 8 months, plus extra just in case. With a lot of help and advice from other sailors and from a dietician from the University of the Sunshine Coast, I ended up with a pretty good diet that’s amazingly close to normal food.”

Jessica’s mother organised the hundreds of meals into daily food bags. Then she put the daily meals into a weekly bag. Then she gathered 4 weeks of meals and

put them into a monthly bag. On the day that Jessica set sail her mother put aboard the boat 8 monthly bags and in those bags were 32 weekly bags. Plus extra. From day one of the voyage all that Jessica was going to need was supplied for her.

Because her mother knew the future food requirements, she was always ahead of the game.

At all times and in every situation, Jessica was well fed.

On the day we got saved, God knew what our future needs were and provided for those needs ahead of time by giving us an abundant provision of grace.

Plus extra.

Paul warns us in Galatian's 5:4
you have fallen away from grace.

And in Galatians 3:3

"are you so foolish? You began with the Holy Spirit.

Are you now trying to complete God's work in you by your own strength? "

We are saved by grace through faith so that we cannot boast. Just because we cannot boast does not mean that we cannot celebrate. We can look back to that day and rejoice that we made the right decision. And thank God that not only did he give us the faith and grace that we needed to make the right choice. But also believe that on that day he gave us all that we will ever need. Because he is able to know what the future holds, he

is able to provide ahead of time for all our needs.

Give us today our daily bread. Matthew 6:11

The bread that God is giving you today was prepared for you a long time ago. He is a Father who prepares his children's meals perfectly.

He is never, ever unprepared!

Chapter 6

So, Christ has made us free. Now make sure that you stay free, and don't get all tied up again in the chains of rules and regulations.

Galatians 5:1

On the day of your salvation, you were set free from the law. When we use the word law, we can also use the terms...rules and regulations.

Let me go back to the story of Jessica Watson.

Her parents were put under a lot of pressure for letting their daughter go on this dangerous trip.

Here are some examples of that pressure.

Family groups have questioned the safety of a planned solo trip around the world by a 16-year-old Sunshine Coast sailor.

Jessica Watson, now 15, announced plans yesterday to circumnavigate the globe by herself in an attempt to become the youngest person ever to sail solo non-stop around the world.

Miss Watson has the support of her parents, including dad Roger, who quit his job to help her prepare.

She will be 16 when she sets sail in September.

The reason these people were opposing this voyage was; because of a rule and regulation that all parents have written on their hearts. This is what that rule says.

“Parents must not expose their children to danger.”

Guess what? This rule is not only written on the hearts of all parents, it is written in the Government laws of most countries. Here is what happened when a young Dutch girl wanted to sail around the world.

The Dutch Council for Child Protection is so concerned about the dangers of Laura’s marathon voyage it has asked a court to grant it temporary custody of Laura so it can do what her parents refuse to – halt the trip.

Judges at Utrecht District Court are to announce on Friday whether they will scupper Laura’s record-breaking plans. In the meantime, the legal battle has

ignited a wide-ranging debate even in this traditionally seafaring nation about the role that parents should play in their children's risky adventures.

Also, a child psychologist was against the voyage taking place.

This child psychologist gives us a clue about how these parents justified their decision. He mentions dreams and where you have dreams you have believing.

Winter, the child psychologist, said parents need to step up and warn their children of the risks they are taking.

"As adults, you have a very important responsibility to oversee more aspects than just the (child's) dream," he said. "I'm not saying children shouldn't have

dreams, but sometimes dreams are just dreams.”

Jessica Watson and her parents did not agree with this child psychologist. She believed that she could do it, and her parents believed in her ability to do it, safely and successfully.

The power of believing is the only way to get free of rules and regulations. We only have two choices; you obey what you believe or you obey the rules.

In Galatians, Paul was telling the readers that it was either believe in Jesus and his death and resurrection or believe in the rules of Moses.

It is obvious that you no longer have the crucified Jesus in clear focus in your lives.

Let me put this question to you: How did your new life begin?

Was it by working your heads off to please God?

Or was it by responding to God's Message to you?

Are you going to continue this craziness?

For only crazy people would think they could complete by their own efforts what was begun by God.

If you weren't smart enough or strong enough to begin with, how do you suppose you could get it right by your own efforts?

Answer this question: Does God do these things because of your strenuous moral striving or because you trust him to do them in you?

Abraham believed God, and that act of belief was turned into a life that was right with God.

Is it not obvious to you that persons who put their trust in Christ (not persons who put their trust in the law!) are like Abraham?

So those who live by faith are blessed along with Abraham, who lived by faith—this is no new doctrine! And that means that anyone who tries to live by his own effort, independent of God, is doomed to failure. Galatians 3:1-10

In Jessica Watson's story, we have parents believing in their daughter and a daughter believing in herself. There is a lot of believing going on. They were all tested when Jessica had a collision with a

large ship at the beginning of her voyage. But they overcame their doubts and she succeeded in her goal and went on to become a national hero.

We have a better hope because we believe in someone who can never fail.

Here is another example of the rules that can operate in the human heart. If you are a student, you operate by this rule.

“I must complete my studies.”

Now we all agree that this is a good rule. It makes sense. How could you argue against that logic?

Surely even God would agree with you. Wait a minute!

What if God arrives on the scene?

A group of students experienced a move of the Holy Spirit; this began at morning chapel and went for a few hours. After this happened the pastor in charge of the students called them together and asked the students if they would like to take a break from lectures and normal duties to seek God.

The students had a vote, the majority voted against the idea.

Can you believe it?

They were in college to learn about God... but when they get the opportunity to experience God the majority vote against it?

The reason they did this was because they had their eyes on finishing their studies and getting their certificate...

They missed the opportunity when it came.

In Luke 19: 41-44

Jesus wept as he made his entrance into the city of Jerusalem because they did not recognise the time of God's coming.

John 5:39

You diligently study the scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life.

These are the scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life.

On the day of your salvation you died. Yes, you died to depending on your own efforts. And you died to your own rules of how and when things should happen.

Now listen very carefully.

You do not have to worry about how it will happen or when it will happen...

“Because it has already happened.”

Yee Ha!!! Come on celebrate with me. It all happened on the day of your salvation.

The day God gave you the Gold Medal of his approval. He approved of your decision and therefore he approved of you. Just like the prodigal son.

“When he was still a long way off, his father saw him. His heart pounding, he ran out, embraced him, and kissed him. The son started his speech: ‘Father, I’ve sinned against God, I’ve sinned before you;

I don't deserve to be called your son ever again.'

*"But the father wasn't listening.
He was calling to the servants, 'Quick.
Bring a clean set of clothes and dress him.
Put the family ring on his finger and
sandals on his feet. Then get a grain-fed
heifer and roast it.*

We're going to feast!

We're going to have a wonderful time!

*My son is here—given up for dead and
now alive!*

Given up for lost and now found!'

And they began to have a wonderful time.

Luke 15:20-24

A wonderful time began on the day you returned home. That wonderful time came about because of the Father's wonderful attitude of grace.

The fathers' attitude of grace could be seen in the generous provision of food, clothing, dignity and honour given to the undeserving son.

Your father in heaven is still rejoicing over the day you came home.

The accusing older brother had a few legal issues with all the rules his younger brother had broken.

Such as; do not waste money and do not be immoral. We agree with the older brother that we should not do these things.

But in the end the father spoke about something that was more important and on a higher level.

The father also had a rule.

This is his rule.

And he was not going to break it.

“If I think my son is dead and then find out that he is alive, then I am going to celebrate.”

The fathers rule was more powerful than the elder brother’s rule.

This is Gods rule. Acts 16:30-31

“Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”

They answered, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved.

When the apostles were meeting in Jerusalem, they were discussing what rules to keep and what rules to throw away.

I think they were tired of the rules.

“So why are you now trying to load these new believers down with rules that crushed our ancestors and crushed us,

too?

Acts 15:10-11

The prodigal son did many things the wrong way and then got one thing right. He was rewarded for the one thing he got right and forgiven for everything he did wrong.

Your decision to come home to your father cannot be compared to your mistakes because it was counted by him on a higher level.

You have to compare apples with apples.

The older brother was right at one level and wrong on another level.

Some Olympic competitors lose all their races up to the finals and in the final they run their best race to win gold.

The Olympics that were held in London

were going to be very kind to our Australian swimming team.

Or so we were told and they were led to believe.

One of our best swimmers had competed successfully at the world championships.

He had lots of trophies.

But he did not have an Olympic gold medal.

Everyone knows that the Olympics are esteemed at a higher level by the sporting stars and the public.

This Australian swimming champion failed in the final. He was devastated and is probably still affected by that failure.

It does not matter to him that his wall cabinet is full of trophies.

He wanted to win the highest medal at the highest level and he didn't.

But the prodigal son did. There is no higher choice that you can make than to come home alive to God after being dead in your sin. Congratulations.

You could have stayed away and kept walking down the road to a Godless eternity.

But you didn't.

What more can be said?

What better result can you get?

What a wonderful decision.

You obeyed the one rule that is above all the rules.

“Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved.”

Chapter 7

Peninnah teased Hannah to make her angry.

She did it because the Lord had kept Hannah from having children.

Peninnah teased Hannah year after year.

Every time Hannah would go up to the house of the Lord, Elkanah's other wife would tease her.

She would keep doing it until Hannah cried and wouldn't eat.

Her husband Elkanah would speak to her.

He would say, "Hannah, why are you crying?"

Why don't you eat?"

Why are you so angry and unhappy?"

Don't I mean more to you than ten sons?"

1 Samuel 1:6-8

This husband didn't get it. He wasn't worth more to Hannah than 10 sons. He seems to be a nice man, but he should not have compared himself to a son, he needed to understand that you compare apples with apples and oranges with oranges.

These women were rivals.

The only way for Hannah to win...was to have children. At this time, she was not winning.

Hannah was unhappy, crying, she had lost her appetite, and last but not least she was angry.

The devil and God are rivals.

They fought over you. In the end: you made a choice that made God very happy and the devil very unhappy. Where you are concerned... the devil is a loser.

“Heaven will be happy over one lost sinner who returns to God.”

Luke 15:7

On the day of your salvation the devil lost the battle that counts the most.

On that day you won the victory over temptation...

to do nothing or to turn away from God. Your choice was final and the devil knows it.

Of course, he continues to oppose us, but he is doing that from the position of a loser.

If he is the loser, then you are the winner.

It does not matter if you have lost every battle since then; that does not stop you from being a winner.

You won the battle that matters the most.
Congratulations Champ.

Hannah was not going to roll over and give up. She went to God and gave... what she did not have.

She dedicated her son... that she did not have... back to God.

And God rewarded her. Not only did she get pregnant with a son, she had 5 more children.

The Lord was gracious to Hannah. She became pregnant. Over a period of years she had three more sons and two daughters. During that whole time the boy Samuel grew up serving the Lord.

1 Samuel 2:21

This was Hannah's prayer:

"How I rejoice in the Lord! How he has blessed me!

*Now I have an answer for my enemies,
For the Lord has solved my problem.*

How I rejoice!"

1 Samuel 2:1

Hannah declares that she has an answer for her enemies, God has solved her problem.

Allow me to give you an answer for your enemy.

When the devil attacks you, do not let him choose which area to focus on. He will want to focus on the troubles that are happening today. But we must resist that trap; it can be life-sapping.

No, we should always point his attention back to the day he lost the battle for your

soul. That is his biggest defeat. That is your best result.

Immediately you are on strong ground, you carry yourself... like a winner. And he comes across as a loser.

Those who are right with God have as much strength of heart as a lion.

Proverbs 28:1

The day you got right with God is the day that you became strong. Your decision was a strong decision.

You will never make a stronger decision the rest of your days.

Maybe you are thinking that you felt weak at the time of your salvation.

Don't worry; God is able to turn a weak choice into a strong choice if the choice

was the right choice.

Yes, it was the right decision.

Whose weakness was turned to strength.

Hebrews 11:34

Hannah made the right choice when she dedicated her future son into God's service. She made that decision when she was at her weakest.

God took that right decision and turned it into her strongest decision.

Hannah through her son influenced a nation.

All because... of a moment in time when she got it right.

Your decision to get saved has probably or will probably influence many people's lives.

I hope there is a smile happening as you read this and understand that we are digging out the wells of your salvation.

With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. Isaiah 12:3

Hannah had been barren before her decision that day. Her situation turned around and she became very fruitful. She had no children and then she had 6 children. We all want to be fruitful.

In the Gospel of John, Jesus talks about remaining in the vine.

No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. John 15:4

When we remember the day that we first met Jesus, we are remaining in the vine. We are focusing on him and his grace and

kindness that manifested itself in giving us the opportunity to give to Jesus something that was ours but not present at the time.

We were giving him our future.

And he was delivering us from our past.

A very similar situation to Hannah's.

By looking back to your salvation, you are acknowledging God's grace. Without God's grace we are barren.

But his grace is enough.

His grace has the ability to enable us to succeed where we have been failing.

It is the grace of God that enabled Hannah's body to start rewarding her. Before this her body had not been co-operating. Then God remembered her.

And the Lord remembered her.

1 Samuel 1:19

It is good that the Lord remembered her.
Today it is good that we remember him
and the goodness he showed as we called
upon him in a prayer of salvation.

He immediately responded by washing us
in the blood of Jesus and clothing us as his
children in his love.

He made us co-heirs with Christ.

We were recreated in the image of his son
and invited into heavenly places to learn
to rule and reign with him.

*And God raised us up with Christ and
seated us with him in the heavenly realms
in Christ Jesus.*

Ephesians 2:6

The words raised up, are significant.

Please note.

You were promoted.

You have already been promoted.

You should walk and talk like a promoted person.

Also on that day you were made rich.

I can see your reaction already. “Made rich, sure?” Don’t you believe me?

I didn’t say rich in money. Let’s look at what the scripture says.

With the riches of God’s grace that he lavished on us. Ephesians 1:7-8

Yes, rich in grace.

Are you wondering what that means in the real world? Here is a scripture that talks about the effect grace can have on your circumstances.

And God's grace was so powerfully at work in them all, that there were no needy persons among them.

Acts 4:33-34

Pretty impressive! No needy people.

Please Lord, give me this abundant grace, so all my needs will be met.

His answer to us is.

"I lavished my grace upon you, on the same day that I forgave you all your sins...the day you were born again. And I rescued you from the powers of darkness and brought you into the kingdom of my dear son."

Here is another scripture to confirm the message above.

How much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of

the gift of righteousness reign in life.

Romans 5:17

And another scripture.

For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of his Son.

Colossians 1:13

We got saved, we got promoted, and we got given grace.

And to top it off; we were rescued and made fruitful. Not a bad day's work for all involved. Amen.

Chapter 8

Un-churched people may not understand what we mean when we quote Romans 1:17

“The righteous will live by faith.”

We can explain this scripture by saying, “The decision to believe will determine how you live and what level you will live on.”

But un-churched people know how a river works.

The largest river in Australia is called the River Murray. When I was a teenager, my friend’s parents hired a houseboat for a holiday on the River Murray.

Parts of the river are separated from each

other by artificial locks. These locks stop the river from running dry during periods of drought.

When you travel up the river against the current in a houseboat, you have to go inside one of these locks at different stages of your journey.

Very large steel doors close behind the boat.

The lock master opens up an enormous pipe that lets water flow from the high side of the river into the lock. The houseboat starts to rise until it is level with the river on the high side of the lock. Then a different set of steel doors open and the boat is released out into the wide-open upper spaces of the River Murray.

The houseboat is so heavy and we are so weak in comparison. But all the engineers

do is tap into the ability and power of the river.

They open a pipe...water flows out, and we float up to a new level. We then continue our journey on this new level without a care in the world.

Please allow me to point out how that houseboat was raised up to a new level. First of all, it was because of the work done years before by the men and women who built the lock and its equipment.

Also involved were the people who designed the lock; and thanks to all the scientists who discovered how to make the steel doors.

Then we have to think of all those technicians who built the electric motors; that enable everything to open and close.

Now you understand that thousands of people were involved to make this lock work.

On the day that we stood around and watched the lock lift the houseboat we did not focus on the contribution of all those people.

No...we knew that on the day we were standing there, we had to wait for one thing and one thing only.

We had to wait for the lockmaster to make a decision. Until he decided to flick that switch, we weren't going anywhere. The lock had been designed to be operated by one man to save money on labour costs.

The lock had also been designed to be operated by the flick of a switch.

Here is my main point. Everything was designed so that it all depended on a single decision.

No matter how many thousands of decisions were involved in making the lock and its equipment, there came a point in time where it all depended on a single decision by a single person.

Your salvation opportunity came about by a similar process. Thousands of people over thousands of years played a part in the message of salvation getting to you.

God played the role that only he could play, angels were heavily involved.

Then Jesus brought it all to a conclusion by coming to earth and dying on the cross. The plan of salvation is enormous; it involves all the wisdom of God.

In the end it is designed to operate on one decision at one time by one person. That person is you.

Let me repeat my original explanation from Romans 1:17.

“The decision to believe will determine how you live and what level you will live on.”

You chose to believe in Jesus and that choice determined that you would receive an abundant provision of grace.

And that abundant provision of grace enables you to live at a higher level than would have been possible; if you were depending on your own efforts and energy.

For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle,

*because I persecuted the church of God.
But by the grace of God I am what I am,
and his grace to me was not without
effect.*

*No, I worked harder than all of them—yet
not I, but the grace of God that was with
me.*

1 Corinthians 15:9-10

Paul was living life at a level far beyond
what he deserved.

He had been lifted up to a new energy
level.

He tells us... this all came about because
of God's enabling grace.

When you believed you gained access into
this river of grace.

We have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand.

Romans 5:2

A new level of strength and energy was made available on the day we were born again.

It is still available.

Romans 5:2 says we have “gained access.” Notice the term...”have gained,” not “will gain.”

Another fantastic realisation has just dawned on us.

It is a wonderful thing, when you realise certain scriptures we have known from the past are rising up and making sense in a new and different way.

Let me give you an example. This is a scripture from the Old Testament that I

have always liked, but have not been able to apply.

But for you who obey me, my saving power will rise on you like the sun and bring healing like the sun's rays. You will be as free and happy as calves let out of a stall. On the day when I act, you will overcome the wicked, and they will be like dust under your feet.

Malachi 4:2

When we acknowledge God on the day of our salvation we are obeying him in the highest way possible.

This scripture tells us that healing flows from the warm rays of our decision.

Now listen to this!

The form of healing that flows to you can be physical, spiritual, emotional and relational.

But think on this.

When it says, *“let out of the stall like calves.”*

It means a restriction that was holding you back is no longer holding you back.

Could it mean that we get released from all the guilt that emanates from the many wrong decisions that we have made in our lives?

Guilt holds us back, but remember what Paul said,

“ For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.”

He says he is the least and does not deserve to be called an apostle. Looking back on history, we know that Paul was released from those restrictive thoughts; he went on to become one of the greatest of the apostles.

He was certainly, " *like a calf released from the stall.*"

His guilt about persecuting the church was a weight that was lifted from his shoulders.

We do not have to be weighed down by all our wrong decisions.

Because God has designed a way of salvation that only takes into account the one decision that you got right. Not the many decisions that you may have got wrong.

Let this understanding bring freedom into every area of your heart and may;

“God’s favour rise over you like the sun and may his grace bring healing like the sun’s rays.”

Malachi 4:2

Chapter 9

“What is to be the rule that governs the boy’s life and work?”

Judges 13:12

This is what Samson’s father asked the angel, and below is the answer.

“His head is never to be touched by a razor.”

Judges 13:5

We all know that Samson’s strength depended on him not cutting his hair. His enemies wanted to know what his secret was; so they paid Delilah to find out.

So Delilah said to Samson, “Tell me the secret of your great strength and how you

can be tied up and subdued.”

Judges 16:6

Samson told her his secret and she cut his hair while he was asleep. His strength left him and he became as weak as any other man. His enemies arrested him.

“They set him to grinding grain in the prison.”

Judges 16:21

Samson only had to keep one secret, but he could not resist temptation. If he cut his hair he went to prison.

If he did not cut his hair, he was strong enough to stay free.

He had two choices. Yes or no... which was it going to be? Unlike Samson most of us do not live depending on our physical strength.

*Those who go to Egypt for help are
doomed!*

*They are relying on Egypt's vast military
strength—horses, chariots, and soldiers.
But they do not rely on the Lord, the holy
God of Israel, or ask him for help.*

Isaiah 31:1

True strength comes from God.

If your strength has been stolen, God can give it back. Notice in Samson's story that he was responsible for growing back his hair, but God was responsible for restoring his strength.

*But the hair on his head began to grow
again after it had been shaved.*

Judges 16:22

*Then Samson prayed to the Lord,
"Sovereign Lord, remember me. Please,*

God, strengthen me just once more.”

Judges 16:28

In the end Samson had to look to the source of his strength. He turned to God and God heard his prayer.

I am going to take this discussion in a slightly different direction. I am going to talk about the strength of someone's argument rather than the strength of their arms.

Here is an example of two parties arguing their case before a court. I read this article in the newspaper recently.

AFTER a long legal battle with Japan over its whaling program, the International Court of Justice delivered a historic decision in favour of Australia.

Japan is cancelling its Antarctic whale

hunt for the first time in more than 25 years; just days after the International Court of Justice ordered an end to the controversial practice.

On Monday, the court issued a landmark ruling that found the Antarctic program was a commercial activity disguised as science.

The 16-judge panel ruled 12 votes to four in favour of Australia's argument that Japan's whaling program was not in fact designed and carried out for scientific purposes.

The court ruled that Japan must revoke current whaling permits and refrain from issuing any more.

Japan had been using a whaling convention loophole which permitted killing for scientific research to justify its continuing hunt in the Southern Ocean.

I do not know what your personal views are on whaling?

But I thought this was a good example of a strong argument winning over a weak argument. It was clear to everyone that Japan was not killing the whales for scientific purposes but for eating. It was an easy thing for the courts to decide.

We may not have strong arms like Samson, but we do have strong promises. If you have strong promises you have a strong argument.

And if you have a strong argument, you know for sure that you will always win over the weaker arguments of your opponents.

Naaman, was the commander of the Syrian army.

He was a great soldier, but he suffered from a dreaded skin disease [leprosy]. In one of their raids against Israel, the Syrians had carried off a little Israelite girl, who became a servant of Naaman's wife. One day she said to her mistress, "I wish that my master could go to the prophet who lives in Samaria! He would cure him of his disease."

2 Kings 5:1-3

This important man travels a long way on the advice of a young girl. He showed a lot of trust and probably tired himself out by all the effort.

On top of everything else he was sick. When he gets to the prophet's house, things do not go well. He loses the plot.

So Naaman went with his horses and chariot and stopped at the entrance to

Elisha's house.

Elisha sent a servant out to tell him to go and wash himself seven times in the Jordan River, and he would be completely cured of his disease.

But Naaman left in a rage, saying, "I thought that he would at least come out to me, pray to the Lord his God, wave his hand over the diseased spot, and cure me! Besides, aren't the rivers back in Damascus, better than any river in Israel? I could have washed in them and been cured!"

2 kings 5:9-12

We are about to see how winning an argument can change your life and get you over into the blessing's that are yours.

This man was pretty upset about jumping into the Jordan River. He argued about how good the rivers were back home. But it was a weak argument.

His servants had a far stronger argument. Here it is. Judge for yourself.

Naaman's servants went to him and said, "My father, if the prophet had told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it?"

How much more, then, when he tells you, 'Wash and be cleansed'!"

2 kings 5:13

He was willing to do the big thing, but unwilling to do the small thing. Isn't that what happens when we present the gospel in its simplicity?

For some of our friends or workmates it is a message that seems too simple.

They want bells and whistles.

Because the servants of this important man were able to overcome his argument; they were able to talk him into accepting his healing by dunking himself in the Jordan River.

His sickness had weakened and restricted him from going about his normal activities.

In fact, his sickness had acted like a prison.

Leprosy isolates and inhibits the victim, from enjoying a happy lifestyle.

But this man was set free.

And it would not have happened if his servants had lost the argument.

They won the argument and won the day.

An opportunity was nearly lost. Thankfully wisdom prevailed. Here is the end result.

So Naaman went down to the Jordan, dipped himself in it seven times, as Elisha had instructed, and he was completely cured.

2 Kings 5:14

This man was healed because an argument was won.

In the story of Samson, the argument was lost because Delilah wore him out.

With such nagging she prodded him day after day until he was sick to death of it. So, he told her everything.

Judges 16:16-17

He lost the argument and lost his strength when Delilah cut his hair. Then he lost his sight, after that he lost his freedom.

We have been talking about two men whose lives were very affected by the outcome of a pivotal discussion. In both of the stories there were opposing views. Whoever had the stronger argument or in Delilah's case the stronger way of arguing; won over the weaker opponent.

The sad thing in Samson's situation was; he did in fact, have the stronger point of view but did not prosecute his case well. He was too personally involved.

His emotional state played a role in him giving in to the more dominant person. He should have played to his advantage and told Delilah that the secret to his strength happened a long time ago when an angel visited his parents.

He should have argued that he is strong now because of what happened back then.

As Samson grew up, he would have heard his parents talk about the day the angel visited their house and prophesied about his future as a deliverer.

He probably grew in his understanding of how the promises were manifesting... in a progressive way.

He would have experienced a new strength coming into his life. This is the point I would like us to focus on.

Everything that happened in Samson's future came about because of a very special day in his past.

All the circumstances that are manifesting; or going to manifest in the present or in your future, should be subject to the unchangeable fact that you got the answer right when you decided to follow Jesus.

The following scripture indicates that if you have got your position right with God, then your circumstances will assist you.

Therefore, in the present case I advise you:

Leave these men alone!

Let them go!

For if their purpose or activity is of human origin, it will fail.

But if it is from God, you will not be able to stop these men; you will only find yourselves fighting against God.”

Acts 5:39-39

If your salvation is from God...which it is. Then anyone or anything that is opposing you... has to leave. When someone opposes you, they are fighting against God. Pretty strong argument isn't it.

“But a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law, who was honoured by all the people, stood up in the Sanhedrin and ordered that the men be put outside.

Then he addressed the Sanhedrin:

“Men of Israel, consider carefully what you intend to do to these men.

Acts 5:34-35

This man stood up and argued his case; he did it well enough to persuade the council to let the apostles go.

His main point was;” if these men are right with God, they will succeed and you will fail.”

Accept that you are right with God.

Expect circumstances to assist you.

Believe for the chains to fall off.

Believe for the prison doors to open up.

Believe for your body to work for you and not against you.

Believe for your immune system to come alive.

Believe for the threat of debt to fade.

Believe that you have a strong argument.

Here it is!

If God is for us, who can be against us?

Delilah focused on the negative.

She asked this question, *“Tell me the secret of your great strength and how you can be tied up and subdued.”*

She was interested in what was happening in the present.

She did not want to know... how he got his strength.

But how he could lose his strength.

Which is emphasising the negative.

Samson should have realised he needed to gain the upper hand in the conversation by shifting their attention onto how he got his strength... not how he could lose his strength.

In the same way we can focus on how God is for us, instead of our circumstances that seem to be against us. When the tone of the conversation changes from negative to positive, we increase in strength.

The easy way to do this is to remember that “Gold Medal” moment of your salvation.

In remembering and acknowledging the day that you were promoted onto Gods team, you are putting yourself in charge of what words are being spoken.

That makes you the boss.

Free at last, free to impose your thoughts
and not be influenced by others.

This whole conversation is not about
when you lost your Gold Medal; it is
about when you gained it.

Focus on the victory of that day.

Can you feel the shift?

So, you are a winner after all.

Thank God.

Chapter 10

God is interested in presenting his purposes in a clear way so that he can put an end to all opposing argument.

Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, he confirmed it with an oath.

Hebrews 6:17

God wanted to make it very clear to us all, that he was not going to change his mind. He promised to keep his promise. It was a double promise. This next verse shows us why he was so determined to eliminate all doubt.

People swear by someone greater than themselves, and the oath confirms what is said and puts an end to all argument.

Hebrews 6:16

He wanted to put an end to all the arguments that tell us that God does not want to bless us.

Yes, there are many voices that say,
“we are not worthy. “

But we do not have to listen to those voices.

The discussion is not about whether we are worthy; it is about what God has said. Here is what God has said.

When God made his promise to Abraham, since there was no one greater for him to swear by, he swore by himself, saying, “I will surely bless you and give you many

descendants.” And so after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised.

Hebrews 6:13-15

God said he would bless Abraham.

We know that God did what he said.

Abraham was very blessed.

This affects us because we are Abraham’s spiritual children.

Christ did this in order that the blessing which God promised to Abraham might be given to the Gentiles. Galatians 3:14

When the Bible mentions Gentiles, it is referring to anyone who is not a Jew. So the blessing given to Abraham has been passed down to us through Jesus.

Now let us go back to the book of Hebrews and look at how this impacts

your life.

We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure.

Hebrews 6:19

God has built the New Agreement so that we can have certainty and security.

He has promised by his own name to bless us in the same way he blessed Abraham.

We know that anyone who says, "I promise to keep my promise..." is serious, very serious.

We will not be imprisoned by doubt or fear.

We were born again to live in freedom.

We are the children of a great king.

We are the spiritual children of Abraham.

We are the inheritors of the blessings of God.

We have this hope as an anchor to our soul.

Firm and secure.

On the day of your salvation this was all put into place and it cannot be undone.

Let us ponder your situation.

On the day of your greatest decision; God says he blessed you with every blessing.

In our union with Christ he has blessed us by giving us every spiritual blessing.

Ephesians 1:3

Now we are like Samson, except he was blessed with one blessing which was strength, but you are blessed with every blessing.

But we lose our strength by doubt.
Now you can understand why God went
to such effort to convince us we are
blessed.

He knew that our opponents would try to
get us to doubt or be double-minded. So
let me remind you of his promise.

*To those who were to receive what he
promised, God wanted to make it very
clear that he would never change his
purpose;*

so he added his vow to the promise.

*There are these two things, then, that
cannot change and about which God
cannot lie.*

*So we who have found safety with him are
greatly encouraged.*

Hebrews 6:17-18

Did I just read the words, “Greatly encouraged?”

Yes, I did!

Are you telling me that God has an antidote to discouragement?

“Yes I am.”

Discouragement must never be allowed to imprison us in its dark tentacles. Our salvation has been built in such a way as to include every blessing.

It is part of the package.

A package was given to you that includes all blessing and all grace. It is a complete message.

Given freely to you without any strings attached.

All you were asked to do... was say, “Yes.”

God takes that one yes and builds your new life on the basis of your special moment in time. Mark it out.

It is your day... done his way!

Chapter 11

“Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life.”

Proverbs 4:23

Jesus continues this theme as he talks to a woman he has just met.

“The water that I will give you will become in you a well of water springing up to eternal life.”

John 4:14

After this encounter... we see Jesus is now teaching in public at a special feast when he says.

“Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from

within them.”

John 7:38

I believe and you believe. So if Jesus says that a spring or river is flowing out of our inner self; and he says it is a type of water called living water...who are we to disagree. It must be true!

Here is a story from the Old Testament that illustrates a similar situation.

*The people of the city said to Elisha,
“Look, our lord, this town is well situated,
as you can see, but the water is bad and
the land is unproductive.”*

2 kings 2:19

Let me take this apart. The town is good. The land is not producing. And the water is bad. The villagers have correctly self-diagnosed and come to the conclusion

that all of their problems relate to the condition of the water. The prophet agrees with them and proceeds to fix the problem.

“Bring me a new bowl,” he said, “and put salt in it.”

So they brought it to him.

Then he went out to the spring and threw the salt into it, saying,

“This is what the Lord says: ‘I have healed this water.’

2 kings 2:20-21

Everyone is happy. The problem is fixed. We see from the last statement in this story that the water stayed fixed.

And the water has remained pure to this day, according to the word Elisha had

spoken.

2 kings 2:22

This was not a temporary solution. It was permanent.

On the day we are changed into a new person with a new heart, we are changed forever.

It is not a short-term change.

We may experience a bit of a high in our salvation moment and then come down with a soft or hard landing.

Our emotions are telling us it is a phase or season.

But the Bible does not paint the same picture.

You cannot be born again and again.

You cannot have heart transplant after heart transplant. Remember what

Hebrews 9:25 says,

" Nor did he enter heaven to offer himself again and again."

We are given a new heart once; a spring of living water is opened up inside us once, at one point in time.

If we notice that our circumstances are not flourishing, maybe our spring has become blocked. Your spring becoming blocked is a different problem to your water being bad. Please read this scripture and then answer a simple question.

A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him.

Matthew 12:35

Are you a good person or an evil person?

If you are a son or daughter of the living God you are good because the Bible says: "I will give you a new heart." Yes, you have had a heart transplant.

Did you know that? And if you knew that...did you believe it?

Our believing gets blocked when we start looking at our behaviour or our situation. The following verse contains some good advice.

So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal [permanent].

2 Corinthians 4:18

The difficulty is; you cannot see your new heart, so you compensate by looking for evidence elsewhere.

Your logic puts two and two together and comes up with five.

Your calculations are incorrect.

You have received wrong information.

You are gathering this information by looking at your behaviour over a period of time.

This is the difference between your perspective and God's perspective.

He heard you say, "I believe in Jesus."

When he heard you say this; in your heart or out loud. He immediately took it for granted that you were giving your permission for a heart transplant operation to begin.

Which the Holy Spirit carried out perfectly.

Instantly you were changed into a good person in God's eyes. Apparently, it has taken a little longer to become a good person in your own eyes.

Maybe this is the blockage?

What is the cure you may ask?

This is the cure, fix your eyes not on what is seen,

[your behaviour], but on what is unseen, [your new heart], since what is seen is

temporary,

but what is unseen [your heart transplant] is a permanent solution.

You have a good heart therefore you are a good person. We started this chapter listening to Jesus talking about "*rivers of living water will flow from within.*"

He describes what kind of water will flow from within us. He calls it, "*living water.*" We normally use two terms to describe water.

We say it is fresh water or salt water.

Everyone knows that things do not grow in salt water and secondly, we all know that you cannot drink salt water.

James 3:11 asks us a simple question.

Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring?

The answer is obviously, "no!"

So when Jesus says that living water is flowing from us; he means we are a spring or river, of fresh water, not salt water.

If you are a spring of fresh water; that means you have the ability to make things grow and the ability to provide thirsty

people with a drink that is spiritually refreshing.

Let us wander up to the end of the Bible and find out more about living water.

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal.

Revelation 22:1

Notice it does not have any impurities.eg. clear as crystal.

Some more characteristics are;

On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month.

And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. Revelation 22:2

This river provides plenty of fruit at regular intervals. And it is a source of

healing. This river contains the same water that your river contains. Remember what Jesus told us.

“Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.”

John 7:38

Can I take you to the book of Ezekiel to get a bit more understanding of what this river does?

“Where the river flows everything will live.”

Ezekiel 47:9

Do you realise what this means, the implications are enormous. Wherever you are... there is a river of living water...and where there is this living water... there is life. Everything will live.

Amazing isn't it. That God would be able to do this in an instant in time.

Shall we take up the invitation at the end of the book of Revelation?

*The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!"
And let the one who hears say, "Come!"
Let the one who is thirsty come; and let
the one who wishes take the free gift of
the water of life.*

There is only one appropriate response.

Believe this all took place on the day of your salvation.

Your, "Gold Medal, "moment!

Chapter 12

An example of how grace works.

In the book of Philemon Paul is writing to a leader in the church whose name is Philemon. Paul is writing from prison. He is sending Onesimus, who is an escaped slave, back to his master.

Onesimus, has become a Christian while he was on the run and somehow ended up getting to know Paul.

He has been helping Paul while he is a prisoner.

Paul writes, "I would have liked to keep him with me so that he could take your place in helping me while I am in chains for the gospel."

Now we shall hear Paul's gracious attitude when he offers to repay any money that was stolen, and also repair any relational damage that has been done between Philemon the master and Onesimus the slave.

"So, if you consider me a partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. If he has done you any wrong or owes you anything, charge it to me. I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand. I will pay it back." writes Paul.

This is a great example of how grace works through other people on our behalf. Paul has made the statement at other times, that what he does is really God's grace working through him.

No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.

1 Corinthians 15:10

Paul is doing all he can to deliver Onesimus from financial and relational debt.

He is going out of his way to show favour and influence others to also show favour.

Paul is involved in making sure that the debts of this person are all cancelled.

To help him... be debt free.

That is how the abundant provision of grace that we received at salvation works in our lives to cause people to have a change of attitude.

From resisting us... to assisting us.

We can expect a whole series of adjustments to take place, because behind the scene; God's unlimited grace is at work.

His grace enables us to have all our debts removed one way or another.

Enabling us, to have that fresh start; that we have always wanted.

God has the power to change the attitude of kings, how much more can he change the attitude of the people around us.

"The Lord had filled them with joy by changing the attitude of the king of Assyria so that he assisted them in the work on the house of God."

Ezra 6:22

Expect resistance to turn into assistance.

By the grace of God.

May the end result be a complete cancellation of every debt; both relational and financial.

God can place someone like Paul in our lives; or you may be the Paul that God has placed in someone else's life.

Chapter 13

Freezing a Moment in Time

I am going to look at two different statements that Peter makes in front of Jesus and pay attention to how Jesus responds. Here is the first:

“But what about you?” he asked.

“Who do you say I am?”

Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.”

Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven.

Matthew 16:15-17

Jesus asks a question and Peter gives the right answer. Jesus then proceeds to bless Peter.

Here is the second incident:

Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.

Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him.

“Never, Lord!” he said.

“This shall never happen to you!”

Jesus turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the

concerns of God, but merely human concerns.” Matthew 16:21-23

This time Peter certainly does not get blessed.

Jesus is not happy.

If you were Peter and a news reporter wanted to take a photo and do a write-up on you; which incident would you want him to write about?

Obviously, the first incident.

When you get the answer right, you are blessed by the Lord Jesus himself. This is another example of why God gets you saved in a moment of time rather than over a probationary period of time. He does not hire you and then leave room to fire you. You are not hired... you are promoted into his family. You are

accepted. You are blessed.

You are transformed into the image of his Son in an instant. When Peter got the answer right, Jesus promoted him to leadership.

Notice this: when Peter got it wrong... Jesus did not demote him.

Back we go to the Old Testament.

Elisha said, "Get a bow and some arrows," and he did so.

"Take the bow in your hands," he said to the king of Israel.

When he had taken it, Elisha put his hands on the king's hands.

"Open the east window," he said, and he opened it. "Shoot!" Elisha said, and he shot.

"The Lord's arrow of victory, the arrow of

victory over Aram!"

Elisha declared. "You will completely destroy the Arameans ."

2 Kings 13:15-17

Elisha told the king to shoot one arrow once. The result according to Elisha was... a complete victory was on its way. So, there was a certain and secure future for this king.

But watch out ...the atmosphere is about to change.

It's a pity that Elisha asked the king to do something extra.

Then he said, "Take the arrows," and the king took them.

Elisha told him, "Strike the ground."

He struck it three times and stopped.

The man of God was angry with him and said, "You should have struck the ground

*five or six times;
then you would have defeated Aram and
completely destroyed it.
But now you will defeat it only three
times.”*

2 Kings 13:18-19

This second instruction was built very differently to the first instruction. The first request consisted of a single action. The second request consisted of an unclear number of actions.

Elisha did not specify how many arrows to shoot.

The king would not have known when he had done enough.

In the first incident he instantly knew he had completed the task and completed it perfectly.

But in the second incident the king

entered into a place of insecurity and uncertainty.

When we are insecure and uncertain, we do not grow. We shrink. The great thing about the “Gospel Message,” is its simplicity. Let me quote Paul again.

“Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”

They replied, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved.”

Acts 16:30-31

It is not one thing, then five or six other things.

It is one decision once.

A moment frozen in time!

Written by Tony Egar

Thank you for taking the time to read my book.

I hope that as you look to the Cross: you will be set free from all condemnation and accusation.

If you would like to share with us; please go to our website and leave a message.

God Bless from Tony and Lorna

If you have time to write a review, that would be great.

<https://tonyegar.com/>