

COME AND SEE

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CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH, KANNAPOLIS, NC

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A New Year's Do-Over? Yes, Please!

BY REBECCA SCOTT-FIELDEN

Ahh! The brand new year is already well underway! Most everyone I spoke to was eagerly anticipating its fresh start with 365 crisp, blank pages waiting to be filled with new adventures, the fulfillment of anticipated goals, and for the first time ever, the successful commitment to a new resolution--- but, 2022 has rushed in, already sabotaging the best of plans and sucking the excitement out of the promise of a new beginning.

I am convinced that most of our failed resolutions, disappointment, even resentment, from unfulfilled expectations is because of misplaced priorities. We allow temporal distractions to take priority over Him and neglect the things of the Spirit. We allow our days to begin, inundated by all of the noise that clamor for our attention- our kids, spouses, jobs, the tasks to complete, our phones, a social media, mindless binge

watching of our favorite shows, angry voices spewing hatred and division, and our own selfish ambitions. We roll our worries and concerns around in our brains, obsessing over them, becoming moody and affecting our relationships with those around us. Then we rush to the phone, calling our “besties” to grumble and ask for their opinion and advice. Jesus tells us, *“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”* (Matthew 6:33). He knows what is best for us and when we seek Him first, we are living in His Will, and will experience His peace, joy and live an abundant life.

So, how do we seek Him first? We can establish daily habits of prayer, and spending consistent time in His Word. And may I suggest the first part of the day? There is no sweeter time than in the quiet stillness of the morning. It sets the tone for the rest

of the day, aligning our focus on Him.

“O God, Thou art my God; early will I seek Thee: my soul thirstest for Thee, my flesh longeth for Thee, in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is;” (Psalm 63:1).

Applying Matthew 6:33 to our lives causes radical change. It calls us into an intimate, trusting relationship with God, opposing the focus on our worries, anxieties, material, and temporal things. When we seek Him first, we are actively striving for Christ to reign in our lives; doing life His way. It is not part of a checklist, or a formula to follow to receive the desires of our heart, or earn favor from God. We cannot be in His presence and not be changed. We don't have to seek Him; we get to seek Him.

It's not too late to live abundantly and blessed in 2022, despite our circumstances. Let's resolve today to commit to seeking God first and making Him our priority this year.



The Silversmith

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

BY REBECCA SCOTT-FIELDEN

The story is told of a group of ladies who met together every week to study the Bible. When they got to the book of Malachi in the Old Testament, they came upon the third verse of the third chapter, which says that the Lord, *"He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver"* (Malachi 3:3). Wondering what this statement meant about the character and nature of God, one of the women offered to find out the process of refining silver.

That week, she arranged to watch a silversmith at work. As she watched the silversmith working on a particular piece, he explained that the only way to purify and refine silver is to hold it in the middle of the fire where the flames were hottest so that all the impurities are burned away.

The woman thought back on how *"He sits as a refiner and purifier of*

silver" (Malachi 3:3), and about how God holds us in such a place.

She asked the silversmith if it was true that he had to sit there in front of the fire the whole time the silver was being refined.

The silversmith told her that he not only had to stay there holding the silver, but he had to keep his eyes on the silver every second, because if it was left in the flames even a moment too long, the silver would be destroyed.

The woman was silent for a moment. Then she asked the silversmith, *"How do you know when the silver is fully refined?"* He smiled knowingly and said, *"Oh, that's easy...when I see my image reflected in it."*

When we feel the heat of the Refiner's fire in our trials and

heartaches, what a precious comfort it is to know that our God is still fully in control, His eyes never leave us, and there is purpose in the struggle. And what strength and confidence we gain from the knowledge that we are *"predestined to be conformed to the image of God's Son"* (Romans 8:29). If today you are feeling the heat of the fire, remember that God has His eye on you and will keep watching you until He sees His image in you.

"And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver" (Mal. 3:3). *"For thou, O God, hast proved us: thou hast tried us, as silver is tried."* (Ps 66:10). God refines, proves and purifies us as silver.

Sister, when you are being held to the flame, just remember the Refiner carefully watches over you (Psalm 34:15).



You Are Here

BY MELANIE ELLIOTT

I know you've seen them – those maps that tell you where you are so you can reference how to get where you are going – at the mall or the amusement park or at the beginning of a hiking trail – you know the ones!

I found myself in a discouraged state of mind as I looked around at all of the chaos around me. I wondered why I had to see all of this happening – division, strife, and hate. It can be so depressing.

As I pondered about my situation...

the LORD quickly reminded me that He placed me here – in this country, in this state, in this city, in this family, during this time – for a reason.

Those “you are here” maps came to mind. I am privileged to see the Bible unfolding right in front of me and to be a part of His plan. Best of all, I've read the story – and we win!

I still get discouraged in this crazy world sometimes. But when I remember that He providentially

placed me here, I am humbled. So when you find yourself in a state of despair with all that is going on – remember that the great I AM placed you in the very place you are right now.

Think about that marker “You are here.”

And best of all...He gave us a map to guide us...and we can see where it ultimately leads – to Heaven – a place He is preparing for us!

Esther 4:14

“...for such a time as this”



Called To Serve

How God uses big moments to shape our calling

BY HOLLY JENKINS (WRITTEN IN 2017)

As you look back at things that have happened in your life, it is then you see how God has purposed and orchestrated it all to bring you to where you are now.

He equipped you with your own unique gifts that have helped develop the person you are today. Through every encounter and experience, God has used those unique gifts to help you grow. Whether that growth is through knowledge, strength or perseverance, He is laying out His plan for your life. Learning from experience is a process of developing those unique gifts and skills you were given.

When I was 9 years old, my mother was killed in a car accident. I had to grow up fast and face many hardships as a child. I look at my now 9 year old and couldn't imagine her having to face what I did. Many people faced with hard times give up, turn to drugs, or just mentally shut down.

Thankfully my parents raised me to know the Lord and instilled in me God's promises to love me, take care of me, and never leave me. I always knew He was there.

My family situation wasn't the best and when I turned 18 years old I moved out on my own and started working to put myself through nursing school. I think that was another testament of how God was with me because if you've ever been to nursing school you know you can't make it through without God's guidance. It was there I found my love to help others - the true calling of a nurse. I not only found joy in helping others, but I guess you could say I found myself. God has shown me what He wanted me to do with my life. Had I not been faced with my mother's death at such a young age, I wouldn't have valued life so precious and viewed it from the other side - the side of loss and how it feels to lose someone close to you.

God gave me a passion to help - but He has also given me the desire to help the sickest patient in the hospital. Critical care is an area where you never know what to expect and things change minute to minute. You never forget the patients and families that you come to love. You never forget your first loss, or your first time having to tell a family member their loved one didn't make it.

It is in those moments that God helps you use those unique gifts to help comfort grieving families such as helping a husband tell his wife of 60 years, goodbye or parents of a young adult who lost his battle with cancer say their final goodbyes to their child.

I have had many families ask me how I can work in this kind of environment and my answer is always the same. God gave me a gift to use and the desire of my heart to help others. I know without a shadow of a doubt God has put me where He wants me to be.

Yes, some days I cry with my patients and their families, and yes there are shifts where I don't think I can handle it anymore. It is then I remember the patients that walked out of the hospital that the doctor said never would.

Prayer is the best medicine and God is the best doctor. Using those gifts God has equipped you with not only blesses others but blesses you in return. Use the gifts God has equipped you with and you may find that He opens your eyes to many things you never dreamed possible.

Easy Winter Recipes

- *TORTELLINI WITH TOMATO SPINACH CREAM SAUCE*
- *ONE BOWL CHOCOLATE CAKE*



TORTELLINI WITH TOMATO SPINACH CREAM SAUCE

- 16 oz tortellini
- 1 (28 oz) can diced tomatoes with juices
- 1 cup fresh spinach chopped
- 2 garlic cloves minced
- 2 teaspoon basil dried
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1- 1/2 cups whole milk or a combination of heavy cream and milk
- 2 tablespoon butter*
- 2 tablespoon flour
- 1/4 cup Parmesan cheese

Directions:

1. Bring a large pot of water to a boil and add the tortellini until they rise (about 4 minutes). Drain. Hint: cover the water as it heats to bring it to a boiler quicker.
2. In a large pan or wok, saute the tomatoes, spinach, garlic, basil, salt, and pepper over medium heat until the water from the tomatoes bubbles, about 3 minutes.
3. Add the milk, butter, and flour. Stir to incorporate the flour into the butter. Add the Parmesan and stir well. Simmer for 3 minutes as the sauce thickens.
4. Remove from heat and toss with tortellini.

Note: *If using part milk and part heavy cream, do not use butter.

ONE BOWL CHOCOLATE CAKE

For the cake:

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 large egg
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup buttermilk see note
- 1/2 cup hot water

For the frosting:

- 5 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1.25 cup powdered sugar
- 2 to 3 tablespoons milk
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
2. In a large mixing bowl, whisk together all the dry ingredients. Add egg, oil, and buttermilk and whisk well. Add hot water and whisk until the batter is smooth. Pour into prepared 8" pan.
3. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes OR until the toothpick inserted comes out clean.
4. Frosting: melt butter in a saucepan over medium-low heat. Add cocoa powder and whisk. Cook 2 min; do not boil. Remove saucepan from heat. Add sifted powdered sugar and whisk. Add vanilla and milk, one tablespoon at a time. Pour over warm cake and spread with a spatula. Let cool.



Hearing The Voice of God

2 Allow God to speak to you in the way that He chooses
Ways God Speaks
~Through His Word
Ex. 3:4
Through an audible Voice
Isaiah 30:21
Through dreams
Joseph
Through a still small voice.
1 Kings 19:1-13

What does it mean to hear God's Voice?

1 Don't make guidance complicated.

~ Submit to His Lordship

- Yield to the action control and power of what He has decided for us
- Bring thoughts captive to Christ
- Lean not on your own understanding.

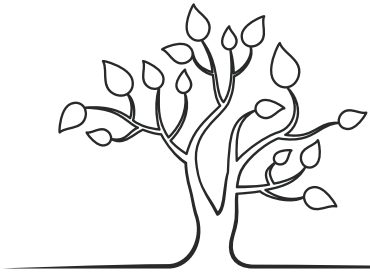
~ Resist the Devil.
James 4:7-8a

~ Expect an answer.

Listen to God
Luke 10:38-42
Psalm 69:13

3 Check Your Heart
Psalm 66:18
Sin hinders Prayers
Prov 28:9
1 Kings 13:1-22
Get your own leading!

God will use others to confirm His direction, but look for Him to speak directly.



Who Said That?

Match each quote to the woman in the Bible that said it .
Text your answers to 704-680-2613 to claim your prize!
Be sure to include your name!

"If I perish, I perish."

A. Delilah

"The serpent beguiled
me and I did eat."

B. Job's Wife

"I laughed not."

C. Athaliah

"God hath taken away
my reproach."

D. Ruth

E. Esther

"Treason, Treason."

F. Rachel

"Curse God and die."

G. Eve

"Tell me, I pray thee,
wherein thy great
strength lieth."

H. Sarah

"For whither thou goest,
I will go."

Notes and Journaling

- Do you sometimes struggle with listening to God's voice?
- When we slow down and stop to pray and meditate - even for a few minutes - how does that change our ability to hear God's voice?
- **READ** Psalm 25:4 - 5; Proverbs 3: 5 - 6; Luke 11:28; John 10:27; Psalm 69:13 & Psalm 5:3
- **WRITE or DRAW** your thoughts:

Notes:

UPCOMING EVENTS

MARCH 8 - FOOD PANTRY
MARCH 26 - AWAKEN
APRIL 10 - EASTER PROGRAM

'SHE READS' BOOK CLUB

MEETING ON ALTERNATE SATURDAYS @ 10:00 AM
AT THE HOLY GRIND COFFEE HOUSE, CHINA GROVE, NC
FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:
REBECCA SCOTT-FIELDEN 704-680-2613

FEBRUARY 26TH
"I CAN SEE MYSELF
IN HIS EYEBALLS"
BY CHONDA PIERCE

GRIEF SHARE

"IT HURTS WHEN WE LOSE SOMEONE. FIND HELP AT GRIEF SHARE."
FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:
LISA SCEARCE 704-640-4381

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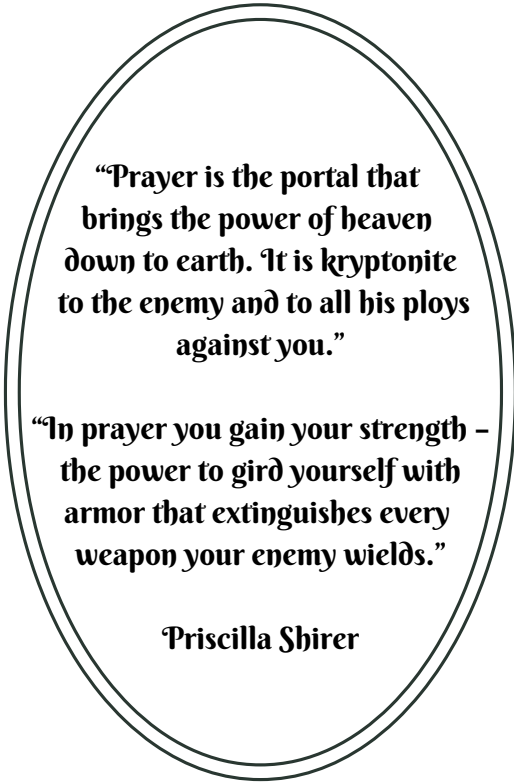
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FOR MORE INFORMATION

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