

Pressing Towards the Goal



Without Dying along the Way

Donna Hayden

Pressing Towards The Goal Trilogy Series
Book One

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Scripture taken from the King James Version of the Bible.

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Inquiries should be sent to:

Email: [donna@ excellentglory.org](mailto:donna@excellentglory.org)

Website: www.excellentglory.org

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Pressing Towards the Goal

Should be the desire of every child of God.

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Preface

The spiritual experiences contained in this book was born out of an odyssey as the Lord took me home to Himself. His presence and appearances along the journey made the bitter experience sweet and the dark path bright. I found rest during the weary days and sleepless nights, and the scars from the pain have become glorious.

These spiritual experiences are in line with and according to Scripture. For example, the Lord appeared to Moses (Exodus 3:1–17) and Joshua (Joshua 5: 13–15).

In one of the Lord's appearances, I found myself in the cemetery. He thrust a sword through my heart. This caused real pain, but the pain was not as severe as I thought. I remembered taking a last breath, and after what seemed like a short time, I rose from the grave. Everything around me looked beautiful. The Lord appeared more glorious than before. He had not changed, but I had.

As I looked at other of God's people in the cemetery, I saw that some were clinging to their lives tenaciously, refusing to die. This made their pain much more severe. They could not be buried at that time because they were wandering about, not fully dead.

Some died more quickly than others and were buried just as quickly.

As they rose from the grave, glory radiated from their temples. These glorious lights lit up the cemetery. We left the cemetery as bright lights, and with new lives. The Lord gave each of us our individual assignments.

I had encounters with many Bible saints¹ along the way. There are biblical examples of such encounters, such as when John encountered an angel. When John wanted to worship him, the angel rebuked him. What the angel said to John suggested that the angel could have been one of the saints who died in the Lord (Revelation 22:8-9).

Though these Bible saints have gone on to be with the Lord, like Abel, they still speak (Hebrews 11:4). Their lives are messages. The message is the everlasting gospel, that Jesus Christ is King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

This book celebrates the Old Testament faith heroes in Hebrews 11.² It tells how their names landed in this hall of faith and declares their message for the household of faith. Each story in this spiritual saga³ is written as an epic poem.⁴ Their lives' story is to back us up, and to cheer us on with hope and anticipation, that we will make Christ the essence of our faith, for He is the great lesson of our spiritual education.

I have purposely stayed away from giving detailed examples of my life to avoid influencing the materials in this book. May the Lord make this reading bring you to a fuller understanding of what it means to be pressing towards the goal without dying along the way.

Though this journey has ended, I must continue in life's journey. There is a race to run and battles to be fought. But my most important mission is my pursuit of God, of His manifest presence. It is this manifest presence that makes Heaven what it is.

¹ This does not mean that I met with actual people. These series of encounters are almost as real to me now as when I first experienced them. Ezekiel and John had similar experiences. The Jerusalem they saw was not the actual city Jerusalem, but a representative of God's people. These spiritual experiences are meant to convey a message.

² Though Joshua's name is not mentioned in this chapter, he bridged the gap between "The People of the Exodus" and "Israel at the Walls of Jericho".

³ A series of events or a story stretching over a long period.

⁴ A long narrative story written in verse, which tells of the heroic deed, bravery, and courage of a single person or a group of people in the culture of their time.

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Most important, I express my gratitude to my Lord for His grace and love during this work and for the Holy Spirit's leading into the amenities of God.

Introduction

Faith is a spiritual principle that God has given to us to facilitate His divine purpose in the outworking of His plan and program for this age. It gives life to things that are unseen as we act upon what we believe based on Scripture.

God loves us, and wants to conform us into the image of His Son in making us a people full of light. He wants to have a dwelling place among us by inhabiting our friendship in such a way and with such a rich level of intimacy that His manifest presence would light up the universe.

God's purpose or end has a crisis and a process, and the means to the purpose is always a difficult road. One cannot experience God's purpose through Bible study, doctrines, theory, or techniques, but only through practical situations. When practical situations or trials come our way, only the revelation knowledge of God can help and save us.

We are not to revel in our day of trouble, but submit to the Lordship of Christ. As we do that, He will lead us through and out of adversity.

There was faith before Christ came, as witnessed by the sacrifice for sinners (Leviticus 5:17-18). The difference between past and present faith is Christ. He now sits on the throne of grace, not imputing unto the world their trespasses (2 Corinthians 5:19).

In the past God dwelt with His people while in the present He dwells in the hearts of His people.

The men and women described in Hebrews 11 had character flaws, disabilities, and shortcomings, and they had to deal with dysfunctional relationships. Some even neglected to take care of issues in their lives and they suffered the consequences. But their life's journey is a lesson to us (Romans 15:4), and we are to learn from them.

Their lives of faith were never free from obstacles. They had struggles of faith and in the end had a triumph of faith. Testing for them was an ongoing process; they had a repentant heart, a teachable spirit, and they learned to trust God and believe His word. Their hearts had an upward thrust, because a relationship with God was the driving force behind their faith.

Because of this, the Lord was greatly pleased with them and their willingness to obey Him in spite of what was happening to and around them.

Paul referred to these Old Testament heroes of faith as “a great cloud of witnesses” that surround us (Hebrews 12:1). In the midst of what they were not, God spoke to their potential and established in and through them that He is who He said He is. He will do the same for us when we yield to His in-working in our hearts.

Chapter One



Abel

The Blood Still Speaks

Abel, you could not live with your brother in peace,
Because he allowed himself to be deceived.
He sincerely thought the works of his hands,
Would compensate for the issues of his heart.
While you offered to the Lord a blood offering,
Cain offered to Him a bloodless one, thus erring.
The Lord accepted the offering you produced,
But rejected Cain's offering and his excuse.

"My best is not good enough"—Cain cried in rage—
"And all my labor for the Lord has been in vain."
But the Lord wanted him to walk in love and truth,
So He offered him a solution to his heart's delusion.
"If you submit to my plan instead of your plan,
Then I will accept your offering," God said to Cain.
But he did not repent of the nature that breeds sin,
And instead allowed anger and pride to fester within.

While you entered in through the door of repentance,
Your brother walked out through the door of offense.
You stayed on the course God laid out for you,

Chapter Eleven



The People of the Exodus

Through the Red Sea for a Night Season

Including the thoughts of one of those fleeing from Egypt

The Lord first led you, His people, through the extreme,
To be tried and true in becoming a people of His dream.
He gently led you through the Red Sea as the billows roar,
While the strong east wind blew you safely to the shore.
The great cloud of witnesses who see our Red Sea ordeal,
Hope that we stay in faith for God's glory to be revealed—
And as He continually lead and guide us through the night,
We will come to know freedom in Christ, much to our delight.

Unspeakable silence as I advance toward the sea,
The language of fear that only God can read.
The chasm up ahead is quite deep and wide,
And my faith is not enough to take me to the other side.
Earthly joy has gone and sorrow is my companion;
The Comforter *is not around*—I feel abandoned.
The day has ended and the night has drawn nigh,
And the dewdrops of sleep fall around me as I sigh.

The anger of the tempest and the foaming of the tide,
Threaten to take me out as I go through this great divide.
There seems to be no haven for any consolation and rest,

