

## A Living Faith

Dear Student,

This fall quarter serves as a hope for eternity with God. Starting in the book of Hebrews, we outline how to live faithfully. Often times we have challenges that affect our faith and seem to provide barriers to our belief. This quarter is an instructional guide.

The testimony of the saints who have gone before us serve as motivating tools, as we persevere to our finish line. Hebrews 12 is a challenge to run. The best athletes prepare their minds and bodies by removing those elements that prohibit their success. The Hebrew writer warns us that sin will become a “snare” in our life. A snare is a trap that is designed to prohibit movement. The writer continues to spur on believers to endure their race. This analogy is a visual representation of our life and ultimate purpose. Jesus is a model for encouragement and a source of strength.

As we focus on the message from Stephen and learn from his martyrdom, these lessons are a guide for growth and development. Seek truth like the Ethiopian eunuch who was diligent to search the scriptures and willing to learn. And finally allow God to humble your heart as we read from a hero of faith, Paul. He taught and led despite persecution and affliction.

My prayer is that you boldly, unashamedly, consistently, take up your cross to follow God!

Peace,

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Do you have suggestions for *Inteen*®? I want to hear from you! Send your thoughts to the editor.

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Department of Publications of the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World, Inc., 3939 Meadows Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46205, ph.: 317-547-9541; Presiding Bishop: Bishop Theodore L. Brooks, Sr.; Editor: La Nej Garrison; Director, Department of Publications: Evangelist Neechy Dumas; Editor, Apostolic Light: Dr. Ruth A. Tyson Newton; Assistant Director, Department of Publications: Evangelist Mona Thomas-Green; Consulting Editor: Dr. Rosa M. Sailes.

*Inteen*® Student, Vol. 52, No. 4, September, October, November 2022. ISSN: 1550-9346. Published quarterly by UMI (Urban Ministries, Inc.), PO Box 436987, Chicago, IL 60643-6987. Founder: Melvin E. Banks Sr., LittD; CEO: C. Jeffrey Wright, JD; Managing Editor: Daschell M. Phillips, MS; Editor: La Nej Garrison, MA; Writers: Charity G. Carter, Crystal Green, David Harris, Joi Orr, Richard Shepherd, Jordan Steward, LaTonya Summers, Kyle Waalen, Vernon Woodard. Lesson Development. Copyright © 2022 by UMI. All rights reserved. All Scripture not marked KJV is taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide. zondervan.com. The "NIV" and "New International Version" are trademarks registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office by Biblica, Inc.™ All proper names mentioned in this publication are fictional unless otherwise indicated. Printed in South Korea. \$3.89 per copy. Single subscriptions: one year \$34.99 (postage included). To order: Contact your local Christian bookstore; call UMI at 1-800-860-8642; or visit our website at [www.urbanministries.com](http://www.urbanministries.com). NO PART OF THIS PUBLICATION MAY BE REPRODUCED IN ANY FORM WITHOUT THE WRITTEN PERMISSION OF THE PUBLISHER.

# Faith

By David Harris

Walking through the valley of the shadow of death.  
I know this 'cause my Lord has just put me in a test.  
Don't listen to these liars; they will end up in hot fires.  
Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth—it's called my BIBLE.

Never stray away from Jesus and all of my teachers.  
Blasphemous preachers causing trouble for one reason:  
Death despairs evil without care.  
But with God we can do anything anywhere.

Everywhere I go I know the Lord; He is with me.  
We all have free will so I believe like Ripley,  
And I have complete confidence in my Lord Almighty.  
When I read my Bible I just do it like Nike.

I have a strong belief in Him to forgive me of all my sins.  
'Cause He is undefeated like a long streak of wins.

Feeling good about the Lord 'cause my faith right here is strong.  
He tells me where to go and what is right and wrong.  
And to the nonbelievers, they can come and tag along.  
Because the feeling of victory, it will last life long.

Luke 1:37 says, ...“ with God all is possible,”...  
And I learned from the Word that all mistakes, they are washable.  
This is unstoppable, obstacle; He is really phenomenal.  
And to think that I will be without faith—  
The thought is improbable.

## 9.4 Burnt Out

the big idea: Faith Calls  
for Perseverance



After school, T.J. ran down the sidewalk to catch up with Marcus.

“Slow down, Marcus,” T.J. said, catching his breath. “What’s the rush?”

“Got stuff to do,” Marcus said, fidgeting with his backpack.

“Me, too. Mr. Adams gave my English class a ton of homework,” T.J. said. “Are you still coming to Bible study tonight? I haven’t seen you there in a couple weeks.”

“Naw,” Marcus said. “I don’t think I’m coming back.”

T.J. stared at his friend and tried to read his expression. Marcus simply looked away and kept his head down as they turned the corner and walked down Marcus’ street.

“What’s up with you, Marcus?” T.J. asked. “You haven’t been yourself lately.”

Marcus shrugged his shoulders. “I dunno. Just a little burnt out. That’s all.”

“Bible study is a great place to rejuvenate and focus on the Lord,” T.J. said.

“It’s nice to leave your stress at the door and dive into God’s Word.”

“I guess,” Marcus said. “With all the stuff I’ve been dealing with, sometimes I wonder if God is even there—if He even cares about me and my stupid problems.”

“Of course He does,” T.J. said.

“We can’t let this world get us down. It’s temporary, but Christ’s love is eternal. God wants us to be closer to Him and learn about Him more. He should be the focus of our lives.”

“It just gets so hard, ya’ know?” Marcus said. “School, sports, my job, and issues at home—it’s overwhelming.”

Marcus stopped in front of his house.

“I hear ya,” T.J. said, “but Jesus has your back. We can’t give up. How about we make a deal and look out for each other. Let’s pray together and do a daily Bible reading. Let’s go to the weekly Bible jam.”

“All right,” Marcus said. “We have a deal and I’ll be there tonight.”

### from your Bible

**Hebrews 10:19–31, KJV**—Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,<sup>20</sup> By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;<sup>21</sup> And having an high priest over the house of God;<sup>22</sup> Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our

hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.<sup>23</sup> **Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised);**<sup>24</sup> And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:<sup>25</sup> Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.<sup>26</sup> For if we sin wilfully after

that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,<sup>27</sup> But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.<sup>28</sup> He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:<sup>29</sup> Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the

Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?<sup>30</sup> For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.<sup>31</sup> It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

## Scripture discussion

In today's passage, the writer of Hebrews discusses the practical implication of the life of Jesus. How do His life, death, and Resurrection affect the religious communities? In the opening passages, it clarifies that the veil has been torn, meaning that everyone who wants to get to Jesus can have access to Him. When Christ died on the Cross, He made the ultimate sacrifice and restored the divide that sin had created between humankind and Himself. Animal sacrifices, an Old Testament practice, were no longer necessary, and there was no longer a "curtain" separating people from the di-

vine. It is because of Christ's sacrifice that we as Christians have hope. The writer continues to explain, how scripture's fulfillment of the promises gives us hope, so we must hold on! The early Christian church experienced persecution and pain, but the writer reminds them that our end is eternity. The writer of Hebrews tells us that through faith and because of the blood of Jesus, our sins are forgiven and we can experience the presence of our Lord in a new, life-giving way. In our story, Marcus was overwhelmed by his earthly life and didn't know what to do. Instead of clinging to his faith in the Lord, he was drifting away from God. T.J. reminded Marcus that he was not alone and that Jesus gives people hope to carry on.

## make it real



### check it

1. Why was T.J. concerned about Marcus?
2. What was bothering Marcus?
3. Why did T.J. think Marcus should come to weekly Bible Jam with Pastor Nick?



### think it

1. What are we to hold to unswervingly? (Hebrews 10:23)
2. What happens if we deliberately keep sinning? (v. 26)
3. What is the significance of verse Hebrews 10:29?



### do it

In today's passage, you are challenged to hold on to your faith as you remember God's fulfillment of His Word. What challenges do you face, that threatened to rob you of your hope. Discuss with another person; share and encourage each other.



### keep it

**"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)" (Hebrews 10:23, KJV).**

## 9.11 Be Not Discouraged

the big idea: Faith Is Assurance



**A**manda spent every Saturday morning unpacking boxes and stocking the shelves at the local food pantry. She tried to get some of her friends to volunteer with her, but no one ever came. She decided to ask Mr. Winslow, the food pantry manager, for some advice.

“Hi, Amanda,” Mr. Winslow said, as he took inventory. “How are things going?”

Amanda hesitated. “Do you ever get discouraged working here?”

Mr. Winslow looked up from his clipboard. “What do you mean?”

“There are so many people out there who need food,” Amanda said, “and the demand is overwhelming. It seems like very few people are willing to help, and I know dona-

tions this year have dropped a lot. How do we keep up?”

“Times may get tough,” Mr. Winslow said, “but that doesn’t mean God isn’t in control. And that doesn’t mean we give up and stop doing His work.”

“But things are pretty bad right now,” Amanda said.

“I must admit that things haven’t been this bad in a long time,” Mr. Winslow said, “but God is here with us. Times change, but God doesn’t.”

Amanda nodded in agreement. “I guess it’s hard to remember sometimes.”

“Very true,” Mr. Winslow said. “We must always remember to trust in God and seek refuge in Him. Not only should we remember, but we must help others remember, too.”

### from your Bible

**Hebrews 11:1–3, 6; Psalm 46:1–3, 8–11, KJV—**  
**Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.**<sup>2</sup> For by it the elders ob-

tained a good report.<sup>3</sup> Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

**11:6** But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that

he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

**Psalms 46:1** God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. <sup>2</sup>Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; <sup>3</sup>Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.

**46:8** Come, behold the works of the LORD, what des-

olations he hath made in the earth. <sup>9</sup>He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire. <sup>10</sup>Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth. <sup>11</sup>The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.

## Scripture discussion

God is the Creator of all things, and He is in complete control. This is an important truth because the cause of the universe determines our purpose within the universe. You are not an accident, and neither is humanity the result of a random series of accidental events. No matter what happens—natural disasters, disease, or poverty—God is still sovereign. Our ability to understand the trial does not remove the trial. When we are faced with trials, God is our refuge and strength. We can trust that God is with us. What a comfort it is to have the

Almighty God on our side! Therefore, do not be afraid and do not be discouraged.

Because of all the conflicts in the world, people may lose hope for positive change. According to the writers of Hebrews and Psalms, the Lord is with us and remains the source of our hope. In today's story, Amanda was struggling with the poverty crisis. She was overwhelmed by this huge problem and didn't know what to do. Have you ever felt this way? The media is filled with negative images that promote despair and hopelessness. No matter what happens, God is in control. It is important to trust in the Lord and keep doing His work, no matter how daunting the task may seem.

## make it real



### check it

1. Why was Amanda so discouraged?
2. Why was Mr. Winslow not discouraged?
3. How does the situation in the story apply to today's culture?



### think it

1. What are the characteristics of faith described in Hebrews 1:1–3?
2. What role do the elders play? (v.2)
3. How are the verses in Psalm 46 comforting to Christians?



### do it

In today's passage, we explore the truth about Creation and its implications. Discuss the various "creation" stories. What does this mean for humanity if any of them are true? How is the Gospel different?



### keep it

**"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1, KJV).**

## 9.18 Endurance Run

the big idea: Faith Is Endurance



Donald took the flyer handed to him. He elbowed Mike in the ribs. “We should do this.”

Mike grabbed the flyer and gave his friend a skeptical look. “The 5K Turkey Trot? You feeling okay?”

“We’re on the track team. It’s just running,” Donald encouraged.

“Dude, a 5K is like three miles,” Mike said laughing.

Donald rolled his eyes. “So what’s your point?”

Mike sighed. “I’m a distance runner. This would be easy for me. You’re a sprinter. Running one lap around the track has you in tears.”

Donald snatched the flyer and walked away. “I’m running it. I don’t care what you say.”

“I didn’t say you can’t do it,” Mike called after his friend. “I’ll train you.”

“No thanks,” muttered Donald. “I’ll figure it out on my own.”

Donald only had two months to train for the race, but he figured since he wasn’t competing in a regular meet, it wasn’t necessary for him to stick to a strict training regimen. He ran half a mile every weekday and one mile every Saturday and Sunday.

On the morning of the run, Donald felt super-prepared and only slightly nervous.

Donald picked up his registration packet and approached the starting line, confident he would do well. He started the race strong, but he hit a wall after the first mile. He wished he’d run more than a mile in his training and that he’d taken Mike’s offer to be his trainer.

### from your Bible

**Hebrews 12:1–11, KJV—Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,<sup>2</sup> Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.<sup>3</sup> For consider him**

that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.<sup>4</sup> Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.<sup>5</sup> And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:<sup>6</sup> For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.<sup>7</sup> If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?<sup>8</sup> But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and



not sons.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?<sup>10</sup> For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might

be partakers of his holiness.<sup>11</sup> Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

## Scripture discussion

In many ways, life is like a race. Whether you are a Christian or an atheist, life has challenges, victories and yet, it will all end one day. The question remains, why are we in the race at all, and for what purpose? Today's passage answers these questions. Chapter 12 in the book of Hebrews offers a stimulating illustration of how to live life and reach the greatest outcome possible—eternity with Christ. The challenge is that there are all sorts of obstacles that stand in our way and prevent us from reaching our

goals. The writer encourages us to use the examples of those who've gone before as motivation for endurance. Jesus Himself endured cruelty and pain while remaining without sin. When we renew our focus and persevere—no matter how hard it seems—we can rest our hope in Jesus. Donald knew how to achieve success, but failed to apply those principles for every race. He also learned the importance of accepting assistance from those who are able to help him reach his goals. We are called to run a race, trust in the wisdom of our elders, and believe that the finish line is worth resisting every snare we may encounter on the way.

## make it real



### check it

1. Why was Mike surprised that Donald wanted to run the 5K Turkey Trot?
2. List several reasons you believe Donald opted to train alone. What was Donald's sin?
3. How could things have changed if Donald had accepted Mike's help?



### think it

1. How can a "cloud of witnesses" be an encouragement? (Hebrews 11:1)
2. What does it mean to "run with perseverance"? (v. 2)
3. What will encourage us not to "grow weary and lose heart"? (v. 3)
4. How should we respond to correction from God? (Vv. 7–10)



### do it

"Snares" exist all around us. How can you resist the temptation to sin? Why is this important to establish before you encounter temptation? What else can keep you from becoming the person God has destined you to become?



### keep it

**"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Hebrews 12:1–2, KJV).**

## 9.25 A Lesson in Forgiveness

the big idea: Faith Inspires Gratitude



**S**onia didn't believe in the phrase "forgive and forget." Whenever someone had wronged her, she said, "I'll forgive, but I'll never forget."

And she didn't. Every time she thought of those who betrayed her, Sonia remembered the pain and anguish she felt. For some reason, it was easier for her to remember the pain than to forget it and move on. She didn't realize that by holding on to the hurt, she hadn't really, truly forgiven.

At church one Sunday, Sonia learned about the passage of Scripture that says God forgives our sins and remembers them no more. Sonia knew that she needed to forgive completely, but

she didn't agree with that passage. She didn't feel that the people who hurt her should be let off the hook. They were wrong, and they had to be held accountable for their actions.

The day finally came when Sonia said something that hurt her best friend's feelings. Sonia realized that she needed to ask her friend for forgiveness, but she didn't want to.

When she finally mustered the courage to apologize, her best friend hugged her and said, "I forgave you the second you said it."

Sonia was so grateful her friend had forgiven her before she even had a chance to make things right. Needless to say, the next time she was wronged, Sonia was quick to forgive.

### from your Bible

**Hebrews 12:18–29, KJV**—For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest,

<sup>19</sup> And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more:<sup>20</sup> (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust

through with a dart:<sup>21</sup> And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:) <sup>22</sup> But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,<sup>23</sup> To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,<sup>24</sup> And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.<sup>25</sup> See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on

earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven:<sup>26</sup> Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.<sup>27</sup> And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.<sup>28</sup> **Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:**<sup>29</sup> For our God is a consuming fire.

## Scripture discussion

This passage compares two groups of people: the Israelites on Mount Sinai and those who came to know Christ under the New Covenant. The Israelites had a relationship with God that was characterized by fear; those under the New Covenant have a relationship with God that is characterized by gratitude. The writer of Hebrews says that God, through

Himself named Jesus, brought forgiveness and the promise of eternal life. Jesus removed the boundary and was a mediator between Himself and mankind. The angels stand as witnesses to this event. His testimony both on earth and in heaven is a sign for believers. We are called to accept the gift of salvation, as well as, God's forgiveness. God's forgiveness and His promise of eternal life inspire us to express our gratitude because they give us the freedom to approach God with confidence.

## make it real



### check it

1. Why did Sonia have such a hard time forgiving people?
2. How would you describe the event that caused Sonia to re-evaluate her stance on forgiveness?
3. What caused Sonia to completely change her perspective?



### think it

1. Why did Moses tremble with fear? (Hebrews 12:18–20)
2. What was the consequence of rejecting God's Word? (v. 25)
3. Explain why we should be thankful and worship God? (v. 28)



### do it

Faith, forgiveness, and gratitude go hand-in-hand. Our best response to God's forgiveness is to show gratitude, and we can do that by pleasing God. Come up with a list that identifies the top ten ways to please God and display in your home.



### keep it

**"Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:" (Hebrews 12:28, KJV).**

# The Freedom of Discipline: A Reflection

By Caroline Sumlin





“You’re going to rebel once you get to college,” they said to me.

“They” were my high school friends. I was always the goody two-shoes and they always talked about me. It was believed that I was a goody two-shoes because my mom was strict. She had very specific guidelines about with whom and where I could socialize when I was in high school. While I thought some of the rules were a little extreme, as all teenagers do, I understood and respected them.

However, it wasn’t the rules that kept me disciplined. It was me.

Well, it was actually the Holy Spirit. I just didn’t know it back then.

While I’m grateful for my mother’s rules, and even plan to repeat many of them with my own children to ensure their safety, I wasn’t interested in being a rebellious child in the first place. I had zero interest in parties. I never desired to take a drink. Sneaking out of the house was not on my radar. I loved studying and getting good grades in school. My idea of a good time was a good book and some coffee (still is), and I was genuinely uninterested in anything that I knew wasn’t the “right thing to do.” I never understood why most people my age needed certain illegal and dangerous activities to have a good time. Didn’t people have more regard for their health and well-being than their few moments of fun?

Fast forward to college. To be honest, I was nervous about going to college for this very reason. I knew that the college atmosphere was about drinking, partying, and being as irresponsible as possible with your newfound freedom. I figured I'd struggle making friends due to my "goody two-shoes" nature. And, I was right. Many people didn't want to spend time with me because I wasn't interested in their idea of a good time. Other people tried to make it their mission to "get me to behave in a certain way." They were convinced that I was too uptight and "just needed to loosen up a bit."

I'm happy to report that they were unsuccessful. Ten years later and I've never been under the influence of any substance, and if I did choose to enjoy the rare party, I arrived sober and left sober.

I always wondered what it was. What was it about me that didn't desire to participate in any of the activities that everyone else my age was interested in participating in? Let's be honest. Your college years and your 20s are known for happy hours, going to the club, random hook-ups, and the like. A good time immediately means inebriation when you're young. Yet, for me, not only was I uninterested in the typical idea of fun, it actually made me feel rather uncomfortable and I avoided it at all costs.

As I matriculated through college and my 20s, I also matured in my relationship with Jesus Christ. I began pursuing a relationship with Christ when I was 16 and I began learning more about Him when I was in college. During my senior year, I completely surrendered my life to Christ. My heart was all-in and I never looked back.

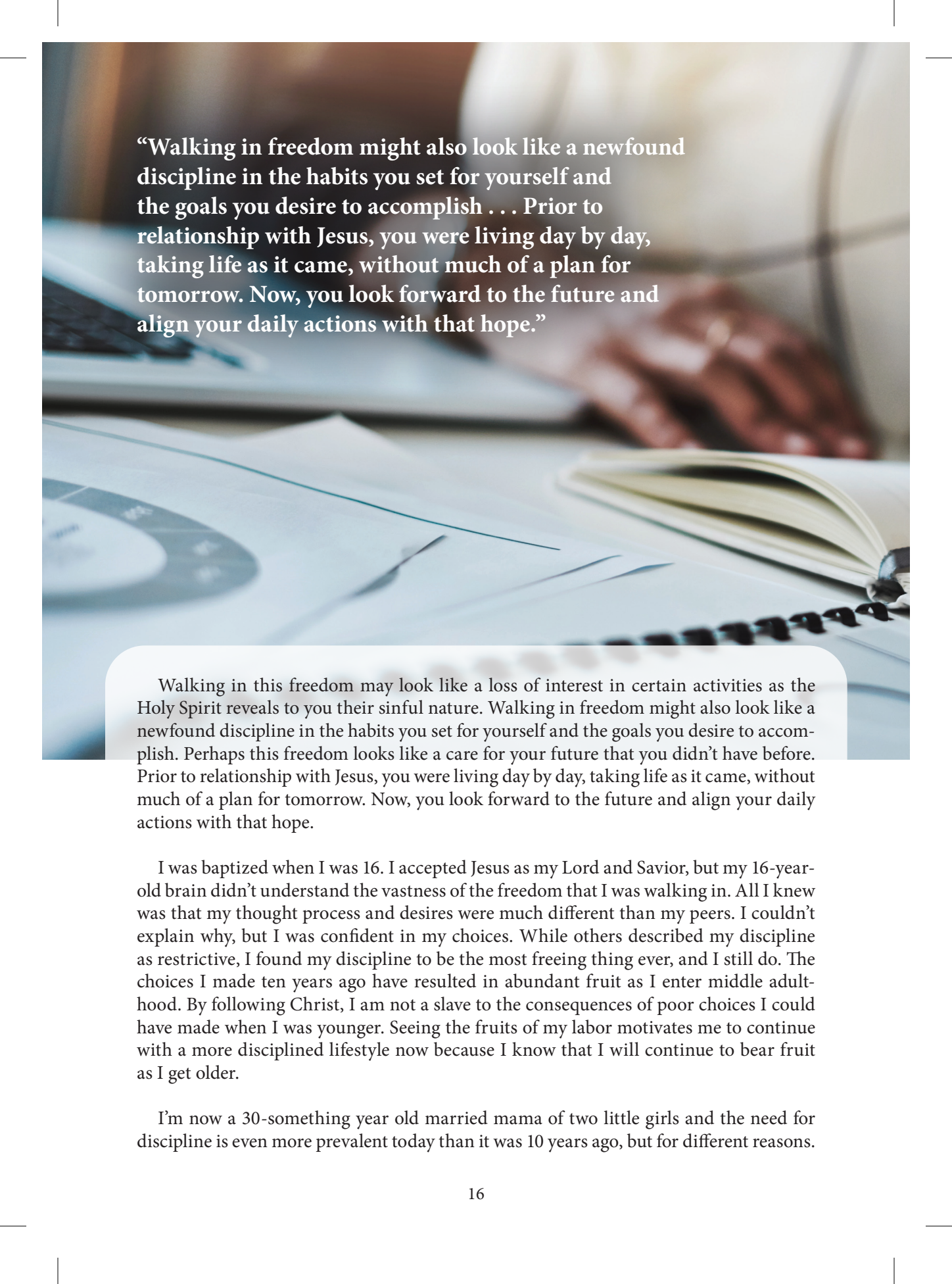
The stronger my faith grew, the more disciplined I became in my thinking and my actions. However, I didn't make the connection at the time between my faith and my personality. I thought my personality was just one that didn't identify with the same thought patterns and behaviors as many other people I knew.

"Therefore we were buried with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too may walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in the likeness of his death, we will certainly also be in the likeness of his resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be rendered powerless so that we may no longer be enslaved to sin, since a person who has died is freed from sin" (Romans 6:4-7, KJV).

The beauty of a relationship with Christ is that we get to walk in freedom. I think sometimes this freedom gets taken for granted. It doesn't always feel like a super spiritual feeling that we may have imagined. We may not feel like we are floating on air, dancing in the fields with butterflies, and smiling from ear to ear on a daily basis. In fact, many of our days will be challenging, stressful, and mundane. That does not negate the fact that we are still walking in freedom. Freedom from sin, freedom from the law, freedom for our future, and free to walk in the fruit of the Spirit.

**“The stronger my faith grew, the more disciplined I became in my thinking and my actions. However, I didn’t make the connection at the time between my faith and my personality. I thought my personality was just one that didn’t identify with the same thought patterns and behaviors as many other people I knew.”**





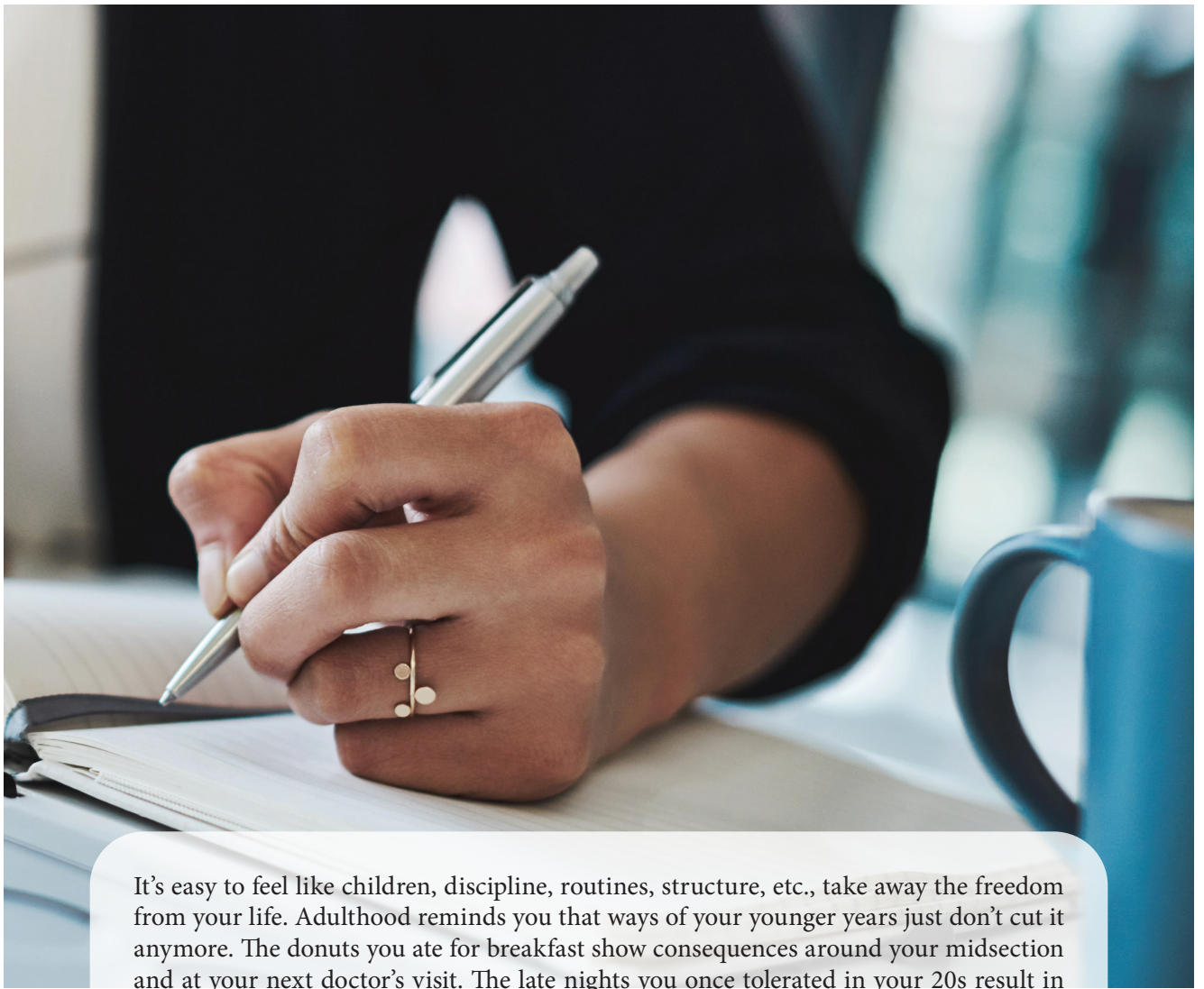
**“Walking in freedom might also look like a newfound discipline in the habits you set for yourself and the goals you desire to accomplish . . . Prior to relationship with Jesus, you were living day by day, taking life as it came, without much of a plan for tomorrow. Now, you look forward to the future and align your daily actions with that hope.”**

Walking in this freedom may look like a loss of interest in certain activities as the Holy Spirit reveals to you their sinful nature. Walking in freedom might also look like a newfound discipline in the habits you set for yourself and the goals you desire to accomplish. Perhaps this freedom looks like a care for your future that you didn't have before. Prior to relationship with Jesus, you were living day by day, taking life as it came, without much of a plan for tomorrow. Now, you look forward to the future and align your daily actions with that hope.

I was baptized when I was 16. I accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior, but my 16-year-old brain didn't understand the vastness of the freedom that I was walking in. All I knew was that my thought process and desires were much different than my peers. I couldn't explain why, but I was confident in my choices. While others described my discipline as restrictive, I found my discipline to be the most freeing thing ever, and I still do. The choices I made ten years ago have resulted in abundant fruit as I enter middle adulthood. By following Christ, I am not a slave to the consequences of poor choices I could have made when I was younger. Seeing the fruits of my labor motivates me to continue with a more disciplined lifestyle now because I know that I will continue to bear fruit as I get older.

I'm now a 30-something year old married mama of two little girls and the need for discipline is even more prevalent today than it was 10 years ago, but for different reasons.





It's easy to feel like children, discipline, routines, structure, etc., take away the freedom from your life. Adulthood reminds you that ways of your younger years just don't cut it anymore. The donuts you ate for breakfast show consequences around your midsection and at your next doctor's visit. The late nights you once tolerated in your 20s result in poor job performance in your 30s. As a parent, your life now revolves around the needs of your children. You lay down your selfish desires to serve your family. You wish you could have more time to yourself, but your children need to eat lunch. All of these realities can, understandably, make you long for those younger years that "felt freer" than the ones you are living in.

Much like submission to Christ results in freedom from sin, submission to the discipline that is required of adulthood results in freedom from the long-term consequences that lack of discipline will result in.

Discipline is freeing.

The Christian life is freeing.

But we must value the result of freedom more than the short-term pleasures of sin.

The fruit you will bear as a result will always be worth it.