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Testimony Time

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"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.." (Romans 8:28)

I grew up my whole life in church. My parents are second generation Christian's; growing up not knowing who Jesus is sounded so foreign to me. I remember saying a prayer when I was 5 or 6, feeling a little awkward, but I knew it was what you were just supposed to do. Fast forward to about age 12; I started to have a horrible fear of the rapture happening and me being left behind. I prayed every single night for the Lord to save me. It was a horrible feeling to struggle with; in addition, I was also going through a few other bad trials (some of my own doing and some not); I just felt so lost. These things weighed on my conscience heavily, every day, for years. But I still showed up to church every Sunday with a smile on my face because I was the pastor's daughter. I felt like everyone viewed me as perfect. I was always at church, and I never complained about it; was always happy to be there and always had a smile on my face. No one was aware that I was having an internal battle, daily, that was tearing me apart.

Fast forward a couple of more years and my physical trials ended, but my spirit still was not right. I thought, "maybe this is just how you are supposed to feel." I lived with these trials for so long it almost became normal. Then on April 18, 2021, my life changed. My youth leader's wife stepped up to the pulpit and gave her testimony; not the one I was expecting, but definitely the one that broke me. She explained that for her entire life she did what she was supposed to do. She said a prayer and went on with her life thinking, "that's just the way it is, I said a prayer so I must be saved." She continued talking about how the Lord spoke to her and for the first time she saw a God of love; not one to be terrified of. I cannot even remember her whole testimony. The more she spoke, the more it felt like Jesus was breaking down walls around my heart that had been there for years. Then she spoke the words that shook me to my very core; she said, "I constantly prayed for the Lord to save me, and for Him to give

me a deathbed for one more shot at salvation." I completely lost it; I told myself, "this is me! The Lord is using her testimony to get a hold of me;" but there was still a bit of pride in the way; so, I told myself, "I will wait until after service because Pastor had not begun preaching yet." The final words of her testimony that the Lord used to break me down were, how in tears she talked about a peace that she never had before, and she realized a side of Jesus she never knew.

As soon as her testimony ended; I was such a mess. I knew it was impossible to wait for service to be over. I was terrified of what my parents would think; but knew I needed to speak up. As everyone bowed their heads to pray I, went to my mom sobbing; I told her that everything Mrs. Ernst said, I had been struggling with privately for years. Mom said to me, as soon as your dad is done preaching, we were going up to his office and talk; as she had no idea what I was going through. When I sat back down in the service, a verse immediately came to my mind, ***"Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away."*** (2 Corinthians 3:16) I could feel the Lord working in my spirit. I literally felt someone grab what I could only describe as a vail in front of my eyes and gently pull it away. The Bible came alive to me that day. I was shaking and sobbing as I looked down at my Bible and the verses I was reading felt like they were jumping off the pages. Verses about Jesus' love for me, eternal security, and more. I just sobbed my way through the whole service. It was as if my head knew who Jesus was my whole life, but that day my spirit finally knew; and right after service, in Pastor's office, I bowed my head and said a prayer that I cannot remember for the life of me, but I remember feeling overwhelmed with peace; knowing that Jesus just saved me; I just kept sobbing, knowing I did not have to live my life in extreme fear and terror anymore. The trials I mentioned in the beginning of my testimony, came back to my mind, and with my parents, in that little office, I was able to place the burdens and the sins that I had been carrying my whole life, at the feet of Jesus once and for all. All my regrets, my shame, my health problems, Jesus used them all to bring me to Him; and now it all

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all makes sense.

The person I am today is all because of Jesus, not for my head knowledge of him, but because of my personal relationship with Him. I will forever be thankful for the trials in my teen years because they are without a doubt what lead me to the feet of Jesus. Thank you for allowing me to share my testimony with you.

Origins

'The heavens declare the glory of GOD and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.' (Psalms 19:1-2)

Standing alone upon the earth, man gazes into the star filled heavens: And as he contemplates the countless points of glittering light, he considers not that the Earth is only but a tiny speck of light, lost amidst a vast sea of darkness whose shores lie hidden; far beyond his comprehension. He beholds wonders, so wonderful that his imagination fails him. He looks away, seeking for words in which to frame what he has seen, but he finds them not. He beholds mysteries so mysterious; that when he seeks for their elusive answers; he finds himself unable to even formulate their proper questions. The heavens speak: they cry to be heard; they seek his open ear: but man hears them not for he has abandoned the belief that GOD, in the beginning, created the heavens and the earth. With his eyes, he sees not: with his ears, he hears not: for he has closed his eyes and his ears to the truth and chooses not to understand. For him, the voice of the heavens, which declares the glory of God, has been silenced. From within his self-imposed darkness, life, he concludes, is but a mystery, full of unanswered questions: GOD may appear to be the answer for the simple minded; but for him, the mystery continues to elude him only because he has not asked the right questions.

In his quest to understand his origin, to know his purpose, to unravel his destiny, man contemplates these unanswered questions. Searching for answers to life's many mysteries, man's vain imagination takes him far beyond the realm of reason. Having precluded GOD from the equation, he has deprived himself of the truth; left to his own shallow understanding, he perceives not that life, without GOD, loses its meaning. He does not perceive that life without a CREATOR has no explainable beginning; no reasonable origin; no purposeful

destiny; no achievable end: there is no alpha, no omega. We are simply become so much space garbage, the byproduct of spontaneous generation; a design with no designer: we serve no reasonable purpose; it becomes our solitary function to simply deify ourselves: but to what end; for what possible good?

'Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, ...Who changed the truth of GOD into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the CREATOR, who is blessed for ever. Amen.' (Romans 1:22, 25) Is it not true that our eyes are never full; our lust never satisfied? Do we not constantly hunger for that which we cannot explain apart from a CREATOR? Without a GOD, what becomes the destiny of mankind? Does not life become incarcerated? destined to self-indulgence; to debauchery and ultimately to self-destruction? Eliminate GOD from the equation of life and man is left with only himself to worship. ***"... then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."*** (Genesis 3:5)

In GOD life has an origin; GOD created us in his own image. We are morally sentient beings, responsible to a righteous, holy and loving CREATOR. In GOD, life has purpose: we were created to worship and glorify our CREATOR: to serve him, not by force, but willingly: the answer of a good conscience towards GOD. In GOD, life has a destiny: we are predestined ***'...unto the adoption of children by JESUS CHRIST to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.'*** (Ephesians 1:5) ***'That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in CHRIST.'*** (Ephesians 1:12) In GOD, there are no unanswerable questions; there are only unasked questions.

Ask yourself: "What is the origin of my life? What is the purpose of my life? And what shall be my destiny?" If you answer these questions in the absence of a Creator, then you are, of all life forms, a creature most miserable. For there is no greater purpose for your life than to please the appetites of your own flesh. There can be no greater pleasure than the pleasing of yourself. You are destined to live a shallow existence, a life of self-indulgence, whose god is your belly. And whatsoever your flesh shall desire, you shall not withhold it. All the labor of your hand shall be for your mouth. And when death visits you, before you are ushered away, you shall remember with fear these words: ***"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who***

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hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. (Romans 1:18-25)

God Took The Luster Off

“Give us this day our daily bread.” (Matthew 6:11) – “Ask, and it shall be given you; *“...For every one that asketh receiveth...”* (Matthew 7:7-8) The word bread, as it is used in the context of our verse, is meant in a generic sense: it represents every physical need of man. Bread is defined as anything necessary for the preservation of physical life; that includes food. This verse also defines the Christian philosophy for daily living. We are to live by faith; dependent upon God; day by day. Jesus said, *“Take therefore no thought for the morrow”* (verse 34), *“for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.”* (Proverbs 27:1) The word of God instructs us to live a life of asking: “Father give us,” in humble submission and in prayerful dependence. This prayer acknowledges our daily dependency upon a benevolent, caring, and giving God. It is when we say we are rich and have need of nothing, that we need to beware: *“Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:”* (Revelation 3:17) By faith, we place our hope and trust in God for our daily needs: the staples of this life. Without faith, we depend upon ourselves to supply our daily needs. Faith leads us to consider the spiritual first, and the lack of faith causes us to

see only the physical – the temporal; that which is destined to fade away.

“And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren. Is not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left. And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar. Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other. Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom.” (Genesis 13:8-12) Like Lot, we look at life through eyes of flesh and choose the land to the east (Egypt – a depiction of the world), well-watered by the river Jordan. On the other hand, Abram, by faith went west into the desert, to a place where he had no choice but to depend upon God for his daily supply of water. The faithless are careful to supply their own sufficiency from the rivers of the world; but the man of faith prays to God for the former and latter rains (Psalms 1:1-3).

For 40 years, God fed the children of Israel with bread from heaven (manna) in the wilderness. God commanded them to gather their bread daily, and to gather no more than what they were able to eat before sundown. Whatever they gathered, over and above, bred worms and stank (Exodus 16:4-20). If we ask in faith, God will supply our need on a daily basis; but not our excess. God will not allow us to hoard away tomorrow's blessings. We need to go to Him on a daily basis, in prayer, with thanksgiving, asking in faith (Philippians 4:6, 19). And if we pray not, then by our silence do we proclaim that we believe not; and have no need of God (Revelation 3:17).

“Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?” (Matthew 7:9) There is nothing more heartwarming than the excitement on the face of a child as he or she opens your gift on that special day. And as we bask in our satisfaction, we do indeed testify that, *“It is more blessed to give than to receive.”* (Acts 20:35) The book of James says: that every good gift comes down from above. If we, being evil, know how to give

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good gifts, how much more does our heavenly Father know to give good things to those who ask of Him? (Matthew 7:11) As a Father, God loves to provide good things for His children, and when we ask not, we deny God that special joy derived from giving.

There are those who believe that God has nothing to do with supplying their daily needs. They believe that sheer will, and hard work has gotten them where they are. They compare themselves to the less fortunate, then they praise themselves for their superior work ethic, saying, "I worked hard to get where I am, I bring home the bacon, I buy the bread, and nobody, including God, ever gave me a thing." Do not get me wrong, it is not that they are mean about it; not at all, they are just ignorant about it. If a man is born handsome, he prides himself as though he caused it to be so. Another is born talented and achieves great fame; he says to himself, "See what I accomplished all by myself." Still another is born with great wisdom and achieved great things; but instead of thanking God for his good fortune, he puffs himself up and pats himself on the back. *"For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?"* (1 Corinthians 4:7) *"Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD."* (Jeremiah 9:23-24)

Our Father is a benevolent, giving God. He gives freely, and then He gives freely, and then He gives freely again. He has set boundaries for the seas, that they should go no further; that the dry ground should appear. He commands and the clouds drop their rain. He causes the sun to rise each day upon the good and the bad. God gave us fertile soil; He sends the sun and the rain. He provides us with seed and the where-with-all to make tools to till the earth. We till the earth, we gather out the rocks, we plant the seed and water it, and then we wait – for only God can give the increase; and not we ourselves. We are not our own providers; we are not self-sufficient, although we may think we are. Everything comes to us through the generous hand of God. God provides the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the sunlight we so desperately need. God provides all of it, and He provides it to both, the good and the bad.

You need to know that, and you need to thank Him for it, and you need to praise Him for His goodness. *"Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over; and in thine hand is power and*

might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name. But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee." (1Chronicles 29:12-14) There is absolutely nothing that you can give to God that He did not first give to you.

"If I have made gold my hope, or have said to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence; If I rejoiced because my wealth was great, and because mine hand had gotten much; If I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightness; And my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand: This also were an iniquity to be punished by the judge: for I should have denied the God that is above." (Job 31:24-28) The fatter we become, the less thankful we are (Deuteronomy 32:15). Truly, it is an enigma well beyond our comprehension. The more we have (real or imagined), the less grateful we are for it. It is a vicious cycle that we are prone to repeat over and over. We ask and God gives. God gives and we take. We take more than we need, and so we hoard. We hoard and we ask not. Our abundance robs us of our dependency upon God, who gives us our daily bread. In the end, we fail to give God our praise and the glory He so richly deserves.

The less I have, the more I realize my great dependency upon Him. But of late, it seems that God has taken some of the luster off my apple. The older I am become, the more infirmities I have acquired. My body, weathered by time and abuse, and self-abuse, have fashioned me into a needy man. I am no longer impatient to arrive where I am going, for I am certain of this one thing only, that when I arrive, I will be older than I was when I began: and once there, I discover that I'm not where I long to be, no matter where I might find myself. For me, this world has lost much of its sparkle. It no longer infatuates me. What I thought in my youth to be gold, I discovered, in time, to be glitter. I have looked behind the curtain; I have seen the great wizard, and it was not a pretty sight. There is no glory for me under the sun; no unfulfilled longings; no lasting exuberance. The dimmer my eyes become with age, the clearer I am able to see. Therefore, do I glory in my infirmities; my need draws me ever closer to His precious bleeding side. I believe that God takes the luster off the apple, lest we become too comfortable in our abundance in this world; and in our flesh. He draws us closer, that we might know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings; being made conformable to His death (Philippians 3:10). We so much desire the gifts of this life and we often look past the Giver. Father, thank you for the greatest gift a man could ever ask for – your Son, Jesus Christ: give me this day, my daily bread, and forgive me Father – for I am a sinful man.

If Two Of You Shall Agree

"If two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 18:19)

I almost passed by this verse. I thought I had covered it under the theme of church discipline, but God told me to slow down and to look at the verse again. I really didn't want to because I have been at this expository for such a long time, and I still have ten more chapters before I'm finished. So, I reluctantly looked at the verse, and God opened my eyes, as He so often does, to the real beauty of this seemingly obscure verse. This verse contains all of the characteristics, which Jesus works so hard to instill into His Church, attributes which if the Church lacks, it will fail to grow in unity and in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. And failing to grow, not learning to maintain good works for necessary uses; becoming unfruitful.

The first thing I would bring to your attention is: in order for two to agree, they must first be "gathered together" (vs 20). This might not seem to be a big deal on the surface: people meeting face to face; you say, "what's so strange or enlightening about that?" It says, you need to be gathered together in order to have communication. We live in a time when almost nobody gathers together face to face. We call people on the phone, we text message them, we send e-mails back and forth, we send cute little emojis, we Snapchat, we explore each other's Social Media pages, we send images of everything to each other, we correspond by letters; even to those who live next door. Business meetings are being rapidly replaced with tele-conferencing, like Skype, Zoom and GoTo Meeting. The world is bent on eliminating personal contact; social interaction. We are becoming isolated, even in the midst of over population. We yell at people on the phone that we would never yell at if they were in our face. We send e-mails on purpose to avoid confrontational subjects. We write letters, and are psychologically transformed into paper lions, even though we are, in reality, too meek or shy to say a word in public. Avoiding face to face contact has conformed us into a nation of greater and greater hypocrites and cowards. Jesus says we need to gather together; we need to engage in open, honest face to face discussion.

The second thing that I would bring to your attention is, "...if two of you shall agree." Two must agree as touching anything or something. There needs to be face to face open, honest discussion, until two minds come together. There must be agreement. There must be singleness of minds. ***'Can two walk together, except they be agreed?'*** (Amos 3:3) We might start out on separate sides of an issue, but open, honest discussion is designed to bring people together. We do not talk to each other anymore; we talk at each other. We begin by not agreeing and then we digress into argument; attacking each other's character. We engage in conversations only to be heard, that we may display our brilliance, which we have convinced ourselves we possess. We are not interested in learning or in being taught. We walk with a forward mouth; we speak with our feet; we teach with our fingers (Proverbs 6:12-13), we do not listen because we are sure that we already know everything there is to know. ***'And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.'*** (1 Corinthians 8:2)

Well, you say, that is not true, there is a lot of open debate and honest discussion taking place in this country. Oh yeah! When is the last time you heard open debate and honest discussion coming out of Washington DC? One only needs to watch 15 minutes of any news broadcast to realize that Washington breeds chaos and spreads discord. Those people are supposed to represent us, and they have not been able to honestly discuss anything for a very long time. The only thing they can agree on is to erase God from every public place in America that they possibly can! When is the last time your Congressman met with you face to face? When is the last time he asked your opinion about anything? He is not interested in having open honest communication with you, yet he claims to represent your interest. He does not know your interests, nor does he wish to know them. These men and women are proud, "knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth." (1 Timothy 6:4-5).

For all of the discussion that takes place in this country, we are more divisive and divided now than at any other time since the Civil War. There is no unity, there is no agreement, and discussion only makes matters worst because there is no incentive for agreement. Jesus says: two must agree before His Father will grant it. Talk about incentive, there is the incentive; there must be agreement. In order for two

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to walk together, there must be agreement, if not, we shall each walk in our own separate directions. ***'Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand.'*** (Matthew 12:25) Are we not headed towards desolation?

The third thing that I would bring to your attention is singleness of mind, there must be unity. After we have face to face, open, honest discussion; and after we have agreed; we must now have unity. We must be united in a single cause; there must be unity. ***'Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!'*** (Psalms 133:1) There is a time for discussion, but once the discussion is over, it is time to carry out what we have agreed upon, and we must share in the doing of it. Furthermore, there is strength in unity. "And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken." (Ecclesiastes 4:12) Separately, we are not as strong as we are when we are woven together in unity. If you are out there working up a sweat, and I am sitting in the shade sipping down a lemonade, that lends itself to discord, that is not what we agreed too! If we are going to be successful, we all need to be doing what we agreed to. If I am working like a horse, and you are procrastinating like a donkey, and if we are yoked together, we will never accomplish anything. If I want to run, and you want to stay put; we will never make any progress. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." (2 Corinthians 6:14) We need to be equally yoked together; there needs to be unity in mind; unity in spirit; unity in purpose; unity in our goal; and unity in determination.

The fourth thing that I would bring to your attention is "...any thing that they shall ask." This is unity in prayer or praying together. After we gather face to face, after we have had open, honest discussion, and after we agree as touching something, and after we are united in seeing the thing accomplished, the next step is for us to go to God and ask His blessing on it. I have often heard it said that people that pray together, stay together. It is easy to say I will do this, and I will do that, but it is God that directs the steps of man. For what we ought to say is: if the Lord will, I shall live and do this or that (James 4:15). And this leads us to the last thing that I would bring to your attention, and that is, "...it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." It is God that gives the increase. The best laid plans of mice and men are all for naught, if God does not do the performing of it. How often men will say, I did this for God, and I did that for God - listen my friend, ***'...it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do, His good pleasure.'*** (Philippians 2:13) We are labourers together with God. He is the Husbandman, and if He does not give the increase, then all our labour shall be in vain.

It is a seemingly obscure verse of scripture that is often overlooked, sitting amidst the other verses, and as I said before, I was of the mind to simply pass it by, but I was prevented. The verse contains God's formula for raising up a successful Church. It also contains God's formula for possessing a successful marriage and raising obedient children. We need to gather together, in His name, having open, honest, face to face discussion, we need to come to agree as touching everything, we need to have unity of mind, unity in purpose, unity in our goals, and unity in determination. We need to be unified in our prayers; asking God to bless the performing of it, and then we need to realize that unless God gives the increase, our efforts are in vain. I suppose it could be said that this is God's formula for success in almost any endeavor we may set our hearts and hands to.

Ava's Verses

This month Ava's Verse is: ***"A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband; but she that maketh ashamed is as rottenness in his bones."*** (Proverbs 12:4)

Check out this website: sermonaudio.com



Brianna's Africa Trip

I was recently blessed with an incredible opportunity to go on a mission trip to Nigeria with my missions Pastor and his wife (Pastor Scott and Laura Allis). I met so many amazing people, from all over the world, and I learned so many new things about different cultures, and about myself.

At seventeen I had only traveled once before, without my parents. Other than a few day trips to Canada, I had never been out of my country, so this trip was a pretty big deal. I was not afraid though. I was very comfortable with Pastor Allis and his wife; also, I knew that lots of people were praying for me. My God "compasest my path..." (Psalm 139:3).

The trip to Nigeria was very eye opening. I got to see how other people live in another country; not just hear about it or read about it; but to actually see it and live it with them. It was there, away from my family and the comforts of my country, that the Lord brought me to realize, through preaching, what He had been slowly working on inside me. The Lord made me realize that I needed to make my faith my own.

I got saved at a young age: I love God, and I always tried to obey His will. The Lord showed me that the revelation I had at age seven was no longer adequate for my seventeen-year-old self. I could no longer rely on my parent's faith. I needed to know, for myself, why I believed what I believe. Once I realized this, it became so clear to me that this is what God had been trying to show me. I made a conscious decision to make God, My GOD, and to make my faith, my own faith. After making that decision, I felt like I was learning things I already knew over again, for the very first time; because in a way I was. I was not just learning things, I was learning them for myself; which made them far more powerful and meaningful to me.

On this trip I was able to see God's perfect timing: it felt like God was doing things just for me. The fact that we went to Nigeria, when the lovely people we visited, sponsored a weeklong camp; the theme of which was faith – this was God's timing. The fact that, when we visited it just "happened" to be during Africa's "cold" season (temperatures in the seventies), was also His timing. The fact that two amazing Pastors from Belarus just "happened" to come to Africa, at the exact same time, was not a

coincidence. The fact that the first sermon I heard was preached by one of these two men and the message was about "making your faith your own," was the Lord's timing. The fact that the other Belarus Pastor preached and talked to me about the great need to really study and mediate on God's word, was not an accident: it was God's perfect timing because the Lord knew exactly what I needed to hear.

I saw the Lord work all things together for my good, that I might grow and strengthen the faith that I have in Him to grow, strengthen and make new the faith that I have in Him: but not to make me a better person, but so I could better know and serve Him: so that through me He might be glorified. **"Thou art my God, and I will praise thee: thou art my God, I will exalt thee. O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever."** (Psalm 118:28-29)

Evil Doer

Is it mourning unto thee to do good; is it heaviness to thy soul; a burden to thy flesh? Sadness possesses every idol thought, as though death was demanded of thee. Thou lookest to the left and behold; thy friends make merry in the distance. In your absence, their lips are occupied cursing thy name. When thou was drawn to do right, they made sport of thee; all the effort of your hands was mocked. But when thou thought to do evil, then they rejoiced; and they became your fellows. Thy soul was lifted up from the pit of despair to meet thee. Thy flesh was revived from the grave; and every darkened thought filled thee with bliss.

Woe unto thee that putteth light for darkness, and darkness for light. Woe unto thee that calleth good evil, and evil good; for there is no soundness in thee; thou hast gone away backwards. Why hast thou trusted in falsehood? Why art thou contrary? Why is thy whole head sick?

Knowest thou not that evil is a thief; a parasite that sucketh out thy life, as though it were blood; and giveth not back again. Evil is multiplied beyond measure as good is drained from thee. Who shall hold back the tide that shall overtake thee in the way? As minutes turn into hours, and hours turn into days, so shall your life flee away. Soon your years will have been spent; and there is no profit under the sun, for all the labour given to your hands; for the heart is deceitful above all things, and full of every evil imagination.