



DAY ACTS 14:19-22

1

Will following Jesus make life an easy road? Consider these heroes of faith. In 1942 Corrie ten Boom and her family, devout Christians, hid Jewish refugees in their home during the Nazi invasion of their country. Eventually, their hiding place was discovered. Corrie and her sister were sent to a concentration camp, and most of the family died. The Apostle Paul also had plenty of first-hand experience with suffering. A crowd in Lystra stoned him and dragged him outside the city. What did he do? He got up and went back into the city. Paul didn't focus on his circumstances. He looked to the One who held his life. As followers of Christ, we will not be exempt from hardships in life. Remember, Earth is a temporary stop. Don't expect to feel at home here. Instead, like Paul and Corrie, depend on God who has given His best for you.

DAY 2 CORINTHIANS 4:16-5:9

2

How did those world-class swimmers, gymnasts, and runners qualify for the summer Olympics this year? With an unswerving focus. An Olympic athlete fixes his eyes on the final goal. She trains with commitment and endurance, knowing that the hope of a gold medal at the end will be worth the trials she faces each day. They labor through the discouragements by disciplining their minds to meet the challenges of weariness and failure. Are you living like an Olympian in training with your eyes focused on the gold of eternity? Are you single-minded in living every day to please Christ even though troubles weigh you down? Live by faith in what you cannot see at the end of this earthly road. That final goal will be worth all the struggles and trials of our training time in this life.

DAY JOB 1:13-22

3

Is there a point at which your devotion to God might fail? If you should find yourself at that crossroad, what would you do? Both the Old Testament character, Job, and a nineteenth-century believer, Horatio Spafford, reached such a crisis. Job lost his wealth and ten children in one day. Spafford lost his four children in an accident at sea. What did they do when their tragedies threatened their faith? Job's response was to fall to the ground in worship. And Spafford? He poured out the worship of his soul in a hymn that has become a standard for believers, "It is Well with My Soul." When the dark night of pain and suffering threatens to overtake you, run to God. Ask for His heavenly perspective on your earthly mess and throw yourself on the mercy and grace of the God who loves you to the cross and back.

DAY HABAKKUK 3:17-19

4

If the Old Testament prophet, Habakkuk, authored a book in 2016, he might have written this: Though I never have children, though I squeak by with a small paycheck each week, though I experience death or divorce of my loved one, though bad knees or a weak heart keep me from enjoying an active lifestyle, though I reach retirement and fail to see my life goals accomplished ... YET, I can enter daily into the awesome presence of the One true and living God who whispers, "All of these discouragements and failures are temporary and passing, my child. Take joy in Me. I will be your strength every moment of this life and your complete fulfillment in eternity." When life leaves you empty, focus on God, not on your circumstances. Seek Him and find joy in His presence, power, and forever promises to you. This will be your strength for living.

DAY 1 CORINTHIANS 15:50-58

5

Do you like to read the last chapter of a book first? Sometimes, we can't resist knowing the ending. As followers of Jesus Christ, we know how the story ends. We've read the last chapter. When our physical lives are over, our story's antagonist, Satan, will throw his most powerful attack at us—death. It will be our last battle, but the victory has already been assured by God's Son, Jesus. He promises His followers resurrection into eternity with Him. Our last chapter is a happy ending. Let the truth of that ending change and influence how you live today. We can stand firm in the face of life's challenges. We can throw ourselves into living and working for the Lord because, even when daily circumstances seem too difficult to bear, we know Who has the victory. We know the end of the story.

AppNotes are available on our Facebook page, Monday-Friday.

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