

## Living The Good Life, Part 6

- **John 11:3-4** Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick. When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.
- **John 11:21** Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.
- **John 11:32** Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.
- Jesus had given a promise (“this sickness is not unto death”), but then things seemingly took a wrong turn and Lazarus died. Jesus apparently didn’t get there on time!
- Today’s message is for anyone who has ever been frustrated by the PROCESS on the way to your PROMISE!
- It is not wrong to desire something good from God or to claim a promise from His Word. In fact, He is PLEASED when we do that!
  - **Psalms 37:4** Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.
  - **Proverbs 10:24** The fear of the wicked, it shall come upon him: but the desire of the righteous shall be granted.
  - **Psalms 21:2** Thou hast given him his heart's desire, and hast not withholden the request of his lips.
  - **Psalms 145:19** He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them.
- However, there are some established “PROMISE PRINCIPLES” in God’s Word that we must understand, or we will get very frustrated.

## Promise Principles

### 1. God’s **TIMING** is different than mine.

- **John 11:6** When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was.

- A man rushed into a railroad station one morning and breathlessly asked the ticket agent, “When does the 8:01 train leave?” “At 8:01,” was the answer. “Well, it is 7:59 by my watch, 7:57 by the town clock, and 8:04 by the station clock. Which time am I to go by?” “You can go by any clock you wish,” said the agent, “but you cannot go by the 8:01 train for it has already left.”
- Have you ever felt like you missed God’s train? God’s clock runs completely different than our clock – He has two kinds of time!
  - **CHRONOS** – regular chronological time; PLANTING time
  - **KAIROS** – opportune time of visitation; REAPING time
- **Luke 12:56** Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this **time**?
- **Luke 19:44** Thou knewest not the **time** of thy visitation.
- **Acts 24:25** And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient **season**, I will call for thee.
- **2 Corinthians 6:2** Behold, now is the accepted **time**; behold, now is the day of salvation.
- **Romans 13:11** And that, knowing the **time**, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.
- **Galatians 6:9** And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due **season** we shall reap, if we faint not.
- **ABRAHAM** – when he received his promise, it was still humanly possible to have a child; but it took 25 years of CHRONOS time before his KAIROS time arrived (he was 100 and Sarah was 90!)
- **2 Peter 3:8-9** But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise ...
- **Luke 18:7-8** And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?
- Hold on to the promise until God’s time synchronizes with yours!

## 2. God's PERSPECTIVE is different than mine.

- **John 11:11** Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.
- Our vantage point is so very limited by our humanity. We can't see the future, or even all the circumstances of the present!
- God is not frightened or perplexed by our situations. He knows exactly what He is "doing," and also what He is "allowing."
- **JOB** – in one day his entire life came crashing down; his livestock, children and property were taken away from him, then his health and the love of his wife were taken away from him; but Job couldn't see that God was PROVING him, not punishing him
- Just like we enjoy "proving" (showing off!) a car, a new "toy," or our children's skills, God enjoys proving us to the devil and the world in the ordinary circumstances of life.
- **Psalms 73:2-3, 16-17** But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped. For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked ... When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me; Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end.
- **Habakkuk 3:17-19** Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places.
- **Job 42:10** And the Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before.
- Hold on to the promise when you can't see what God is doing! (Your promise looks dead, but it's really only sleeping!)

## 3. God's METHOD is different than mine.

- **John 11:39** Jesus said, Take ye away the stone.
- **John 11:44** Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

- In almost every situation of life, if we had a preference we would do things completely different than God does things. We would make things a whole lot easier – or at least that's what we think!
- There are some things that God does for us, but there are many things that He wants us to do for ourselves so we can GROW!
- A man found the cocoon of a butterfly. One day a small opening appeared; he sat and watched the butterfly for several hours as it struggled to force its body through that little hole. Then it seemed to stop making any progress. It appeared as if it had gotten as far as it could. The man decided to help the butterfly, so he took a pair of scissors and snipped off the remaining bit of the cocoon. The butterfly then emerged easily. But it had a swollen body and small, shriveled wings. The man continued to watch the butterfly because he expected that, at any moment, the wings would enlarge and expand to be able to support the body, which would contract in time. Neither happened! In fact, the butterfly spent the rest of its short life crawling around with a swollen body and shriveled wings. It never was able to fly. What the man in his kindness and haste did not understand was that the restricting cocoon and the struggle required for the butterfly to get through the tiny opening were nature's way of forcing fluid from the body of the butterfly into its wings so that it would be ready for flight once it achieved its freedom from the cocoon. Sometimes struggles are exactly what we need in our life. If God allowed us to go through our life without any obstacles, it would cripple us. We would not be as strong as what we could have been ... and we could never fly!
- **Isaiah 61:3** To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness – **YOU PUT IT ON!**
- **Matthew 18:9** And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee – **YOU PLUCK IT OUT!**
- **Luke 6:37** Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven – **YOU FORGIVE!**
- **DAVID** – he was anointed to be Israel's next king by Samuel, but instead of heading to the throne he spent the next several years as a fugitive from Israel's current king! Several times he had the chance to take matters in his own hands, but he let God fulfill the promise through his own method.

- **1 Samuel 24:10** Behold, this day thine eyes have seen how that the Lord had delivered thee to day into mine hand in the cave: and some bade me kill thee: but mine eye spared thee; and I said, I will not put forth mine hand against my lord; for he is the Lord's anointed.
- David, you kill the bear, you kill the lion, you kill the giant ... and you exercise self-control (a lot harder to “hold back” than to “step out” sometimes!) when you’re tempted to use your own method instead of God’s! God’s method is often “harder” but it always has better results – it keeps David from becoming another Saul!
- Often when our promises come to us, we still have to make our way through a heavy stone and stinking grave clothes! God sometimes sends us people who are still bound hand, foot and face (they can’t help, they can’t walk, they can’t see!). And then He calls us to unwrap them from their bondage. They are resurrected, but they’re just not LOOSE! **Revival has a price!!**
- Don’t get frustrated with God’s method for fulfilling your promise!

#### 4. God’s FEELING is the same as mine.

- **John 11:33** When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled,
- JOSEPH – he was given a promise that his family would bow before him (sheaves of grain; sun, moon and stars); instead, he spent nearly 15 years in prison, all because others betrayed him! Can you imagine what that FELT like?
- What we can’t see is that when God intends to fulfill his promise, he first puts a sentence of death upon that promise and all the ways and means by which it can be fulfilled. It happened with Abraham! It happened with David! It happened with Joseph! And it happens with us!
- Sometimes the only thing that sustains us in our problems is knowing that God is WITH us, and that HE understands!
- God is too wise to be mistaken  
God is too good to be unkind  
So when you don't understand  
When you don't see His plan  
When you can't trace His hand  
Trust His heart

- **Matthew 28:20** Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.
- **Hebrews 4:15-16** For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.
- Remember that God knows what you are going through!
- **John’s sixth snapshot of a Spirit-filled man: He holds on to hope when things look hopeless!**
- **Joshua 23:14** And ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof.
- **Romans 4:18-21** [Abraham] against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations; according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah’s womb: He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.