

CHANGE YOUR LIFE. CHANGE YOUR WORLD.

# activated

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A photograph of two women laughing together against a dark grey background. The woman on the left is wearing an orange button-down dress and has her hand over her heart. The woman on the right is wearing a white polka-dot top and olive green pants, with her hand on her hip.

## BE A TRUE FRIEND

Speak the truth in love

## Waiting for the Master

Parables about Jesus' return

## Darcy and Grace

Seeing the bright side

## Never Say Never

Expect the unexpected



## PERSONALLY SPEAKING SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

In the Bible we read account after account of people who were accustomed to conversing with God. For example, Noah received detailed instructions to build the ark, complete with a passenger list. (See Genesis chapters 6–9.) Abraham began his great migration to the Promised Land at God’s call, and they continued

to commune together throughout the journey. One afternoon he even had a meal together with God where they had a lively discussion about his elderly wife, Sara, having a son. (See [Genesis 18:1–14](#).)

Moses was one of the greatest leaders in history, leading the whole Hebrew population to freedom from Egypt and establishing the basis of the Old Testament faith when he received the Ten Commandments and other religious laws from God. But most importantly, he was called a friend of God. “The Lord used to speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend” ([Exodus 33:11](#)).

The late Reverend Billy Graham said, “I can tell you that God is alive because I talked to Him this morning.” Those of us who know the Lord personally have ample evidence of our faith and we see Him at work in our lives and in the world around us. As we grow in our relationship with Him and learn to follow His instruction and guidance in the Bible, His voice becomes clearer in our lives. His Word promised, “Call to me and I will answer you, and will tell you great and hidden things that you have not known” ([Jeremiah 33:3](#)).

In this issue, Rosane Cordoba (page 7) tells of a sidewalk encounter after hearing a definite “Stop!” in her conscience. Marie Alvero (page 15) explains how she received the Lord’s direction through Bible verses that He laid on her heart.

The *Activated* team is blessed to have contributors from around the world who share their insight, experiences, and testimonies about their interactions with God. This month’s issue is on a variety of topics—a kaleidoscope of articles! There is something for everyone. Enjoy.

Gabriel and Sally García  
*Activated* Editorial Team

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# CHILDLIKE JOY

BY MARIE KNIGHT



**RECENTLY MY YOUNG SON WAS ECSTATIC TO RECEIVE A NEW SCHOOL PENCIL**—just a regular, old-fashioned, orange, made-in-China pencil. He beamed as he proudly showed it to me and asked me to help him sharpen it for the very first time.

This got me thinking about how children are so eager and excited about everything! They find joy in living each and every day. I remember when I was young and almost everything was a cause for wonder—a new toothbrush, new books, the first signs of a changing season, the wind blowing through the trees, bumblebees flying from flower to flower. The discovery and observation of basically everything was a marvel.

It makes me wonder, when did I stop seeing joy and wonderment and things just became commonplace? And does the loss of this childlike joy stretch into my spiritual life and walk with the Lord?

I believe this is part of what Jesus meant when He said we are to “become like children” (Matthew 18:3). A child is eager and excited to learn new things, treating each as a reason for joy. Children know how to be grateful for every blessing, whether big or small.

Philippians 4:4,6 says: “Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God” (NIV).

God wants us to have joy in our hearts that causes us to praise Him in every situation! “Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you” (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

If you are like me and are having a hard time finding joy in the commonplace things of everyday life or inspiration in your walk with the Lord, try reading or listening to the Psalms. You will discover ways and reasons to give God thanks, even during trying circumstances. “Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever” (Psalm 107:1).

As we praise and thank the Lord, it will change our outlook on life and we will echo David’s words, “Open my eyes to see the wonderful truths in your instructions” (Psalms 119:18 NLT).

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# WAITING FOR THE MASTER

BY PETER AMSTERDAM

WHEN JESUS' DISCIPLES SOUGHT TO KNOW WHEN HE WOULD RETURN AND HIS KINGDOM WOULD BE ESTABLISHED, they went to Him privately and asked Him, *What will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?* (Matthew 24:3). In the Gospels of Mark and Luke, Jesus told two different parables which spoke about His return.

Prior to telling the first parable, found in the Gospel of Mark, Jesus was speaking about events that would precede His return at the end of time. He told His disciples that

only the Father knows when that time will come, but in the meantime, they were to “Be on guard, keep awake. For you do not know when the time will come” (Mark 13:32–33).

He then proceeded to tell them the parable:

It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his servants in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to stay awake. Therefore stay awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning—lest he come suddenly and find you asleep. And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake (Mark 13:34–37).

According to this story, before setting out on his journey, the master set his household in order by making sure that each of his servants knew what they were to do during his absence. He instructed the doorkeeper to stay awake and to be prepared to open the door upon his return. However, the doorkeeper wasn't given any indication as to when that would be.

Jesus went on to tell His disciples that they likewise were to stay awake and alert, because they didn't know when their Master would return. His inference that the master could come *suddenly* didn't mean *soon*. Rather it meant *unexpectedly*—that is, he could come at any time and no one would know exactly when he would arrive. If the servant was found sleeping when the master arrived, he would have failed in his duty.

Similar calls to stay awake and to be alert are found throughout the Gospels: “Stay awake at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are going to take place, and to stand before the Son of

Man” (Luke 21:36). “Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming” (Matthew 24:42).

To be discovered sleeping when one is supposed to be on duty would be considered a shameful failure to fulfill one’s obligations. We read of this very thing happening on the eve of Jesus’ crucifixion when Jesus told Peter, James, and John to “remain here and watch” as He prayed. However, later we read that “He came and found them sleeping,” and said to Peter, “Could you not watch one hour?” (Mark 14:34–37).

What Jesus said to His disciples—to be alert, awake, aware, and vigilant—He says to all Christians in all times, including us today. Jesus calls us to vigilantly live our faith in a manner that ensures we will be ready to meet

the Lord—whether at the time of our death or at His Second Coming.

In Matthew 24, Jesus said, “Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his master has set over his household, to give them their food at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes” (Matthew 24:45–46). The implication is that each believer is faced with a choice. Will we be faithful to the Lord? Will we live our lives in accordance with His teachings?

It’s easy in the course of our busy schedules and all the cares and responsibilities of this life to let our spiritual lives drift to the neglect of our faith and relationship with God. The immediate demands of our everyday lives require us to focus on our work, family, friends, and the seemingly never-ending affairs of daily life. It takes intentionality, as well as time and effort to actively live our faith, to feed our souls, to keep our spiritual lives vibrant and relevant, to fulfill Jesus’ call to us: *Stay awake!*

The second parable, which has a similar message, is found in Luke 12:

Stay dressed for action and keep your lamps burning, and be like men who are waiting for their master to come home from the wedding feast, so that they may open the door to him at once when he comes and knocks. Blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes. Truly, I say to you, he will dress himself for service and have them recline at table, and he will come and serve them. If he comes in the second watch, or in the third, and finds them awake, blessed are those servants! (Luke 12:35–38)

Jesus opens this parable with a call to “be dressed for action.” This expresses the idea of being in a constant





state of readiness to act, as [1 Peter 1:13](#) reiterates: “Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”

In this parable, Jesus used three examples of readiness—being dressed for action, keeping the lamps burning, and being prepared at all times for the master’s return—to express the need for His followers to live in a manner which reflects His teachings. We are to live a life guided by His Word as faithful servants, with one eye heavenward looking expectantly for His return.

He then highlights the reward of those who are ready. “Blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes.” Those who are awake at the master’s return will receive God’s favor. They have been spiritually vigilant, actively living their faith.

Jesus went on to say, “Truly, I say to you, he will dress himself for service and have them recline at table, and he will come and serve them.” The master will reverse roles with the servants, which in essence means that the servants no longer have the same status as before. The master’s treatment of the servants in this parable reflects the actions of Jesus at the Last Supper when He washed

His disciples’ feet ([John 13:4–5](#)). This concept of Jesus as the one who serves is found throughout the Gospels, such as when Jesus said that He “came not to be served but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many” ([Mark 10:45](#)).

At the end of this parable, Jesus said: “If [the master] comes ... and finds them awake, blessed are those servants!” Twice Jesus called those servants who were ready and awake at His return *blessed*. Like the servants in the parable, none of us know the day or the hour of our Master’s return, but we are exhorted to always be vigilant in spirit in anticipation of that time.

We can also take these same principles to heart regarding the time of our death. No Christian in history has experienced Christ’s return, but all Christians who have passed on from this life have come into His presence. None of us know exactly when we will die, we only know that “it has been appointed for each person to die” ([Hebrews 9:27](#)).

How can we prepare for whenever He returns, or when our lives are over? By striving to be faithful servants who base our lives on the teachings of Jesus, who seek to have a vibrant relationship with God and to love Him and others every day, and to be faithful in whatever He has called us to do. In living this way, we will be blessed not only in the present, but for all eternity.

PETER AMSTERDAM AND HIS WIFE, MARIA FONTAINE, ARE DIRECTORS OF THE FAMILY INTERNATIONAL, A CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY OF FAITH. ADAPTED FROM THE ORIGINAL ARTICLE. ■



# COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS

BY ROSANE CORDOBA

**A FEW DAYS AGO**, I was in a hurry and passed by a middle-aged man sitting on the sidewalk between a church and a hot dog stand. I heard a voice in my conscience say: *Stop!* Taking two steps backwards, I crouched in front of him, but before I could say anything he started to weep, saying, “I’m so hungry!”

I bought a hot dog from the stand and brought it back to him. I was about to leave again, but I got another nudge from Jesus: *Aren’t you going to give him a little time, so you can tell him about Me?* So, I crouched again, waited for him to take a few bites, and then asked if he minded if I prayed with him. He agreed, and we prayed together for God to supply his needs and protect him. He also prayed with me to ask Jesus to come into his heart.

While he finished eating, I asked if he needed transport money. He replied that he lived in the bus terminal. Suddenly, all my worries about family, finances, and the like disappeared completely, as I realized how small my problems really were!

That evening, when I looked at my journal, I remembered that I’d started the year with a list of blessings—my family, my house, good food, clean water, my dogs and plants, and so on. These things are great blessings, but I realized they’re not the greatest blessings I have. I added more to my list: salvation and eternal life, God’s Word, His love.

As I meditated on my spiritual blessings, I felt the burden of my material struggles and health concerns become much lighter in comparison with the assurance that God is always by my side, always protecting me, providing for me, and guiding me. It reminded me of [Psalm 27:13](#): “I would have been without hope if I had not believed that I would see the loving-kindness of the Lord in the land of the living” (NLT).

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If you have not yet received salvation and eternal life by accepting Jesus as your Savior, you can do so by praying the following prayer:

*Dear Jesus, thank You for dying for me so that through Your sacrifice I can have eternal life. I ask You to come into my heart and forgive all my sins. Please fill me with Your Holy Spirit and help me to come to know You and love You through reading Your Word in the Bible. Amen.*



A man and a woman are jogging together in a park. The man is on the left, wearing a bright yellow t-shirt and black shorts, smiling broadly. The woman is on the right, wearing a light blue tank top and grey shorts, also smiling. The background is a lush green park with trees and sunlight filtering through the leaves.

# BE A TRUE FRIEND

BY SIMON BISHOP

I WAS LISTENING TO A PODCAST THIS MORNING ON THE TOPIC OF FRIENDSHIP. The speaker was talking about when he was going through a difficult time, and when he received some news that seemed to validate his point of view, he was eager to share it with a friend. Apparently, his friend responded tersely, basically telling him not to allow himself to give in to his tendency to embrace negativity. The speaker said that, although he felt very offended at first by both the answer as well as the tone in which it was delivered, that response from his friend ended up being what ultimately changed his whole viewpoint and put him on the road to victory.

This story stood out to me, as I have experienced something similar. Someone who I thought would be sympathetic and understanding instead responded to me in a way that I felt at the time was unkind, but later I understood that he was only trying to help me and not let me go down a wrong path or embrace a lie. The Bible says, “Faithful are the wounds of a friend” (Proverbs 27:6 NKJV), and I think this means that a true friend loves you enough to tell you the truth, even if he or she knows it might not be welcome





or might even endanger your friendship. True friends are willing to do this because they care about you and not just themselves or their own comfort. The Bible verse goes on to say, “but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.” Just because someone is always willing to agree with you, flatter you, or go along with you, doesn’t necessarily mean they have your best interests at heart.

I was thinking about the current social climate in which it has become so important to not hurt or upset anyone or say something that might be misunderstood or criticized. We have to guard ourselves from falling into the trap of only listening to opinions which coincide with our own, or only surrounding ourselves with friends or colleagues who always tell us what we want to hear. I believe most of us realize that our decisions or opinions are not always right, so being willing to be corrected or contradicted, especially by those we know love us and have our best interests at heart, is important.

In Paul’s letter to Timothy, Paul instructs him to “Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction” (2 Timothy 4:2 NIV). In other words, we should not only be willing to listen to friends who tell us the truth, but we should be the type of friend who speaks the uncomfortable truth as well, doing so with care and patience.

The story of King Solomon’s son Rehoboam is a good example of this. When Rehoboam was about to be crowned king, his people made certain demands of him. When he asked his elderly counselors about this, they recommended that he listen to the people. But then he went to his younger friends and decided to go with *their* advice of being tough and not giving in to the people’s demands. Obviously, he liked the counsel of his friends best, as it probably made him feel more powerful. In the end, however, he lost most of his kingdom because he chose to listen to those who told him what he *wanted* to hear, instead of the wise elderly counselors. (See 2 Chronicles 10:1–19.)

“Oil and perfume make the heart glad, and the sweetness of a friend comes from his earnest counsel” (Proverbs 27:9). I pray that I can be a good friend, and that God will give us all true friends who can be a blessing and help to us, in both the good and the difficult times.

SIMON BISHOP DOES FULL-TIME MISSION AND HUMANITARIAN WORK IN THE PHILIPPINES. ■



When you face a choice between being polite and being honest, err on the side of the truth. It’s better to be disliked but respected than to be liked but disrespected. In the long run, the people we trust the most are those who have the courage to be sincere.

—Adam Grant

Being honest may not get you a lot of friends but it’ll always get you the right ones.

—John Lennon

A faithful friend is a strong defense; for when things are going well with you, he is a good counselor and a sympathetic collaborator, while when things are going badly, he is the truest of helpers and a most compassionate supporter.

—St. Maximus the Confessor

Be the one who nurtures and builds. Be the one who has an understanding and a forgiving heart, one who looks for the best in people. Leave people better than you found them.

—Marvin J. Ashton

# MOVIN' AND GROOVIN' WITH THE CONDUCTOR

BY CURTIS PETER VAN GORDER

DO YOU EVER FEEL LIKE YOU'RE SPINNING YOUR WHEELS AND GOING NOWHERE?

Consider this: We are hurtling through space at a fantastic speed and don't even realize it because we're in constant motion—like being in an airplane.

I was thunderstruck when I found out just how *fast* we're moving. The earth rotates on its axis at 1,700 km/h at the equator. In a year, we also travel around the sun at 107,000 km/h. But wait, there's more! Our whole solar system travels around our galaxy, the Milky Way, at 828,000 km/h, *and* our galaxy is traveling along with 400 other neighboring galaxies at an astounding speed of 2 million km/h toward a place called the Great Attractor, which is also moving towards a large concentration of galaxies called the Shapley Supercluster. Mindboggling!<sup>1</sup>

Not only is everything in space moving so fast, but it is also often beautiful. We are beginning to learn a lot more about what's out there, for example, through the astounding pictures that have begun coming back from the James Webb Space telescope, and they are awe-inspiring. "A team of astronomers has used NASA's James Webb Space Telescope to survey the starburst galaxy Messier 82 (M82). Located 12 million light-years away in



the constellation Ursa Major, this galaxy is relatively compact in size but hosts a frenzy of star formation activity. For comparison, M82 is sprouting new stars 10 times faster than the Milky Way galaxy.”<sup>2</sup>

Isn't it amazing how all things work together in such perfect harmony and synchronization in the vastness of space! The Bible says,

“The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork” (Psalm 19:1).

He is in control and every celestial body is following the conductor in the movements of the cosmic symphony! But God is not only concerned about magnificent displays of His power, He also cares about the little birds and about each one of us! “Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows” (Matthew 10:29–31).

If God is so faithful and cares so much about the macro and the micro, why should we worry?

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1. Inspired by an article in Scientific American by Rhett Herman. Note: Figures have been rounded off for simplicity.

2. <https://science.nasa.gov/missions/webb/nasas-webb-probes-an-extreme-starburst-galaxy/>

POINTS TO PONDER

# The Wonders of God

Look up on a starry night and you will see the majesty and power of an infinite Creator.—*Billy Graham*

God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years.” ... And God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars.—*Genesis 1:14–16*

When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him? Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor.—*Psalm 8:3–5*

By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth all their host. Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him!—*Psalm 33:6,8*

He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds. He determines the number of the stars; he gives all of them their names. Great is our Lord, and abundant in

power; his understanding is beyond measure.—*Psalm 147:3–5*

There is something beautiful about a billion stars held steady by a God who knows what He is doing.—*Donald Miller*

Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his hosts! Praise him, sun and moon, praise him, all you shining stars! —*Psalm 148:2–3*

Look up into the heavens. Who created all the stars? He brings them out like an army, one after another, calling each by its name. Because of his great power and incomparable strength, not a single one is missing. The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of all the earth. He never grows weak or weary. No one can measure the depths of his understanding.—*Isaiah 40:26,28 NLT*

The hands that made the stars are holding your heart.—*Anonymous*

The maker of the stars would rather die for you than live without you. And that is a fact. So if you need to brag, brag about that.—*Max Lucado* ■



# Darcy and Grace

BY IRENA ŽABIČKOVÁ



WHEN I WAS A TEENAGER, I learned an important lesson on gratitude and positiveness. It came while working in a home for the elderly, where I was helping to take care of two ladies who were both in their nineties. They resided in neighboring rooms and they both received the same attention and care.

Darcy was a very picky lady. Her daughter came to visit her often and took her out on walks in her wheelchair, but while family visits were a highlight for most clients, Darcy was never very happy. Nothing was good enough! The food wasn't appetizing, the personal care





Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again—rejoice! ... Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

—*Philippians 4:4–7, NLT*



wasn't sufficient, and on and on it went. Her room always seemed somewhat gloomy, dark, and uninviting.

Then there was Grace. I have never forgotten her name, because it reflected her character; she was graceful and positive. Nobody ever came to visit her. I am not even sure if any of her relatives were still alive, but that didn't affect her disposition. She was always full of light and cheer no matter what happened. Whenever passing by her room, I felt attracted to peek in and imbibe a little bit of the optimistic atmosphere that surrounded her.

I distinctly remember two incidents with Grace that made a big impact on me. One of them happened when I was helping to lift her up from her bed and move her into her wheelchair. Somehow, she slipped out of my grip and fell back onto the bed. Thankfully, she was not hurt! It was mainly just an uncomfortable moment. But I was mortified, thinking of what could have happened. Darcy would have loudly expressed her displeasure for the rest of the day to everyone passing by. But Grace just laughed it off, pointing out how clumsy she had become. I breathed a sigh of relief. Her reaction calmed me down. Yet at the same time it piqued my interest in what her secret was that she could be so cheerful even during unpleasant moments.

The second occasion came when I took Grace out for a walk one day. I helped dress her, and off we went. The home was located in a village, but after exiting the gate, the only way to travel was along a very long dusty road with high concrete walls on both sides. It was not a very inspiring place to walk. An occasional passing car filled the air with smog and dust. I love walking, but this place seemed depressing to me. As I was entertaining these thoughts in my mind, pushing Grace's wheelchair,

she broke the silence with a smile and said, "It's such a glorious day today! The sun makes everything so cheery!"

I looked up and realized the sky was indeed blue and the sun was shining with a pleasant warmth and light. Then she pointed at the only remnant of nature in sight—a tiny weed growing from a crack in the wall. "Wow, look at that beautiful flower! How pretty!" I nearly choked.

From then on, I wanted to learn how to be positive and optimistic like Grace, choosing to look on the bright side rather than the negative. This is a habit that is built over time as we decide to focus on the positive at every opportunity. By rejecting negative thoughts and replacing them with positive ones, this habit gets strengthened. In the beginning it might be a challenge, but with time it becomes easier and easier until it becomes second nature. *Romans 12:2* says: "Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect" (NLT).

The apostle Paul knew something about this principle. He wrote in *Philippians 4:8*, "Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things" (NIV). We would be wise to follow this timeless counsel. Grace did. I believe she chose to focus on the positive her whole life until it became second nature for her.

IRENA ŽABIČKOVÁ IS A FULL-TIME VOLUNTEER FOR PER UN MONDO MIGLIORE IN CROATIA AND ITALY. ■

# ~~NEVER~~ Say Never

BY SALLY GARCÍA

I'VE HAD TO EAT MY WORDS SO MANY TIMES THAT I'VE FINALLY STOPPED SAYING THE WORD "NEVER." Almost every time I vowed, "I'm *never* going to do that!" I ended up doing just what I said I wouldn't do.

In the 1980s, I enjoyed our beautiful classic Airstream trailer so much that I often exclaimed, "I don't *ever* want to live in a house again!" But I've never lived in a trailer since. When we moved to Asia, I said, "Having come so far, we're *never* going back." But within a year, we were back in Latin America, which has been our home ever since.

When our black cat, Bageerah, was 16 years old, I said, "This is our last cat, we'll *never* have another one." But then our grandson made friends with a stray yellow tabby kitten, and even Bageerah seemed to enjoy the tiny kitten's company. They would sunbathe together on the front porch in the mornings, and when Bageerah passed away, the yellow tabby formally became a part of our family.

The saying "never say never" means we should leave ourselves open to the unexpected. I wish I had a crystal ball and could peek into the future and plan accordingly. But alas, it isn't feasible to make strong proclamations about the future from our limited perspective. Life is so full of unexpected turns and surprises that it's impossible to anticipate them all. I imagine God chuckling at my impetuous declarations of "I will *never*..." when I should be more open to what He has in store for me. When I put my affairs in His hands, every change works together for good. (See [Romans 8:28](#).)

I know now that our family would have quickly outgrown the little trailer. If we were still living in Asia, we would have missed our calling to work on Christian devotional material in the Spanish language. And what



would I do without our yellow tabby cat, Sammy, who is sleeping at my feet as I type these words?

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## GOD KNOWS

And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year:  
"Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown."

And he replied:

"Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the  
Hand of God.

That shall be to you better than light and safer than a  
known way."

—Minnie Louise Haskins



# WAITING ON THE LORD

BY MARIE ALVERO

## REMEMBER BACK WHEN WAITING WAS A THING?

When strawberries were only available during strawberry season. When letters took weeks to arrive at their destination. When we traveled by train for hours, or even days. When we watched a TV series one episode each week. When waiting was just a part of life.

I will admit that on some of those three-day train or boat rides I didn't see the value of slow. When I was waiting for a package from my family I didn't understand the gift of waiting. I thought for sure speeding things up would be better. Well, the whole world sped up, and here we are buying tasteless strawberries all year long because we can. What did we lose when we lost the waiting?

Not terribly long ago, life was far more beholden to nature's rhythms and speed. We knew something about growing cycles, transportation speed, and the fact that things didn't come quickly most of the time. Waiting was not absurd, and when God said to wait, at least we had some reference for waiting.

Recently I have found myself asking God to intervene in a situation in my life, and the response God brought to my heart was verses on waiting.

Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord (Psalm 27:14).

They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint (Isaiah 40:31).

Wait for the Lord and keep his way, and he will exalt you to inherit the land (Psalm 37:34).


It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord (Lamentations 3:26).

What's with all this waiting? Well, I don't really know yet, because I'm still waiting. But there are promises for the waiting, like strength, courage, renewal, rewards, and salvation. And these treasures are coming to me, slowly but surely.

I'm learning through this waiting, mostly about the faithfulness and closeness of Jesus. I don't have all the answers, just the strength to keep trusting with expectation. And I'm gaining an understanding of the blessing of this season of waiting on the Lord.

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FROM JESUS WITH LOVE

# A PLACE PREPARED FOR YOU

When I was on earth, I told My disciples that I was going before them to prepare a place for them in My Father's house, so that where I am, they would be also ([John 14:2-3](#)). This place is for all those who love Me, and is filled with My glory and perfection in every way.

No matter what path your life takes and what challenges you face, no matter when your earth life ends, you are Mine, and I ransomed your life through My death on the cross ([Mark 10:45](#)). I died for your sins and I will always love you. So do not let your heart be troubled, but trust in Me ([John 14:1 NLT](#)).

When you walk through times of uncertainty, trust that I am with you, and I will provide the faith and grace to meet every challenge. I am your Anchor and the one true constant in your life. I am your Rock—the One that will never change and cannot be moved. Your path will shine ever brighter with My presence until that perfect day ([Proverbs 4:18 NKJV](#)).

Whenever you are tempted to worry about what the future holds, remind yourself that I have prepared a place for you for when you finish your race on earth.—Not only that, but there is a crown of righteousness that awaits all those who keep the faith and eagerly look forward to My return ([2 Timothy 4:7-8 NLT](#)).