



DAILY MORNING DEVOTION
Bina Bangsa School KJS



Bina Bangsa School
培民学校

WEEK 4

MONDAY

“Gideon and his three hundred men, exhausted yet keeping up the pursuit, came to the Jordan and crossed it.”

—Judges 8:4

Press on, friend. The Bible is full of exhortations to press on no matter what the circumstances. Judy Rice presses on. She wrote me recently, “Joni, your daily devotional *Diamonds in the Dust* has become my constant companion as I sit in my nursing home and wait for breakfast. I have been in a wheelchair since 1965, having found myself with multiple sclerosis as a very young adult.”

This woman lives in a nursing home, sits in a wheelchair, waits for her breakfast, and remains faithful in her daily devotions despite facing an uncertain future. Doesn't her example strengthen your resolve to press on?

The Bible makes much of sticking to it when it comes to living with unpleasant circumstances.

In Judges 8:4 Gideon's troops were exhausted. They were completely worn out, but they kept pursuing the goal. They ended up victorious in battle. The result? Greater glory to the Father. Then there's Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. Talk about someone facing unpleasant circumstances! The Lord says in Matthew 26:38-39, “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death...My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me.” But Jesus presses on, saying, “Yet not as I will, but as you will.” The Lord persevered and obtained salvation for the world. The result? Greater glory to the Father.

Judy Rice is fighting her own battles and praying her own prayers about cups of suffering passing her lips. Because she presses on by God's grace, she's in a class with Gideon—yes, even with the Lord Jesus, who welcomes her at his side.

What battles are you facing? Whatever they are, draw encouragement from Gideon, the Lord Jesus, and Judy Rice...and press on!

If today I feel as though I can't go on, Lord, help me to press forward. Thank you for the examples of Gideon and Judy Rice. Most of all I'm grateful that in you I find more than an example...I find strength!

TUESDAY

“Just as the sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives, so also through Christ our comfort overflows. If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in you patient endurance of the same

God uses people as audiovisual aids to strengthen others. But wait: Does it mean that the inspiring person is nothing more than an object lesson from which others can learn? Is that person’s example only for everybody else’s benefit? If so, it makes God seem utilitarian (and we can’t have that!).

When I think of audiovisual aids, I remember the time Bonnie Rennie, a blind woman, read aloud from her braille Bible when I spoke at a church. We all sat there near tears, listening to Bonnie’s strong voice as she read, moving her fingers across the braille pages. I was *inspired*.

Here’s the neat part: whatever others gain from watching Bonnie gets credited to her account. That’s what the apostle Paul meant when he said, “I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith, so that...your joy in Christ Jesus will overflow on account of me” (Phil. 1:25-26). When other Christians gain strength from Bonnie’s example, their joy in Christ overflows...on account of Bonnie. And it’s all being credited to her spiritual ledger.

When Bonnie and others like her hang in there through God’s grace, it does something for the rest of us Christians. It strengthens us. The body is better and brighter. And how wonderful that God credits it all to the account of those who suffer. Truly, one day the last shall be first!

This is good news for you if you think your life doesn’t matter or you aren’t making much of a contribution to the body of Christ. The way you live your life *does* make a difference—to the church as a whole and to you in particular.

God of all comfort, how marvelous to be reminded that you use my sufferings not only in my life but also in the body of believers. Thank you for blessing others and myself in one fell swoop.

WEDNESDAY

"I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation."

—2 Corinthians 6:2

Chris is a middle-aged man with Down's syndrome who lives with his folks. He enjoys volunteering with Awana and taking part in various socials at church. And he's blessed with an unusual gift: he doesn't understand time. Every day, for Chris, is the same as the day before.

I know it's frustrating for Chris at times, but I call it a gift because every day is the day of salvation for Chris. A faithful churchgoer, Chris listens intently to the messages, whether they be light and whimsical or heavy on the fire and brimstone. And on days when a speaker gives a stirring invitation to join the family of God, Chris is usually heard to remark to a nearby elder after the service, "I accepted him today! I accepted him!" His face shines and his eyes overflow with joy.

Skeptics would tell you Chris hasn't got a clue as to what he's doing. If he knew, they would argue, he'd realize how unnecessary it was to be saved more than once. Chris doesn't see it that way. And God doesn't, either. Both the Lord and Chris are able to enjoy that blessed gift of nowness. Every past moment of conviction of sin, for Chris, gets poured into the now. Every hope he has of heaven and of having a new body and mind gets poured into now. And the feeling is overwhelming for him.

Some days I wish I could shed myself of time and live as Chris does—enjoying God's sense of nowness. I know I've been called to build upon and move past the foundation of salvation, but to recall those broken and tender moments of joy for the first time—*that* would be blessed.

Father, creator of time, suspend for me this moment my history and my future. Let me enjoy, for just now, what it was like to enter your favor for the first time. Grant me that joyful bliss of heaven today.

THURSDAY

“Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel. As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. Because of my chains, most of the brothers in the Lord have been encouraged to speak the word of God more courageously and fearlessly.”

—Philippians 1:12-14

I’m not like Paul; I’m not in prison—far from it! But I can identify with the bolts and bars of a prison cell. This wheelchair is made of a lot of metal, and in a way it’s confining. I suppose that’s why so many prisoners write me. My testimony has encouraged them, and they look at my bolts and bars and understand.

Even though I know nothing of the kind of imprisonment the apostle Paul went through, I do know I like his attitude. In the Scripture for today he basically says, “Okay, so I’m in chains? My bolts and bars help me spread the Good News. Every time they chain me to another guard, he gets an earful of the gospel. And my imprisonment helps others to become bold.”

I’ve read letters from prisoners who say the same thing. “Okay, so I’m behind bars? It’s a chance for me to draw closer to Christ.” I can say the same thing. “Okay, so I’m in a wheelchair? These bolts and bars give me a chance to spread the Good News to anyone who experiences confinement and limitations.”

What are your chains? Maybe you feel chained inside your room for this brand new term, restricted to socialize with friends and schoolmates. Maybe you feel imprisoned in this pandemic which basically limits our movement. Goodness, we all can name the bolts and bars that confine us. Look at today’s verse again. Has what happened to you served to advance Christ’s gospel? It should. It’s the locale from which God wants to work.

Help me today, Lord Jesus, to rejoice in the confinements of my life. Enable me to see my circumstances as boundaries you have erected to work within.

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FRIDAY: VIDEO PRESENTATION

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MENU 