



# Goeie Nuus Good News

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## Finding God in the Silence

### 1. GUARDING THE INNER LIFE

*"Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life"* (Proverbs 4:23 ESV).

*"Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for Him; fret not yourself over the one who prospers in his way, over the man who carries out evil devices! Refrain from anger, and forsake wrath! Fret not yourself; it tends only to evil. For the evildoers shall be cut off, but those who wait for the Lord shall inherit the land"* (Psalm 37:7-9 ESV).

*"But watch yourselves lest your hearts be weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and cares of this life, and that day come upon you suddenly like a trap"* (Luke 21:34 ESV).

*"Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour"* (1 Peter 5:8 ESV).

*"But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander"* (Matt. 15:18-19 ESV).

Sober-minded living begins with intentional guarding. Scripture reminds us that the heart is the source from which life flows, and I've learned that guarding my heart means more than just avoiding obvious sin.

I find that I need to guard what I read, listen to, and watch, but also the hidden sins of the heart: pride, comparison, bitterness, and subtle compromises that go unnoticed if I'm not paying attention.

Jesus often pointed beyond outward behaviour to inner motives. A sober mind isn't distracted or

dulled by excess noise; it's attentive to what's shaping the soul. What we repeatedly allow into our minds slowly forms our desires, decisions, and direction.

Sober-mindedness asks an honest question: Is this feeding my faith or fogging my focus? **Wisdom grows when we slow down long enough to examine what's influencing us.** When we're intentional, we create space for God's Word and Spirit to speak clearly.

Guarding your heart isn't restrictive, it's protective. It keeps your mind clear, your conscience tender, and your life aligned with God's purposes. What voices or influences might God be asking you to limit so your heart stays clear and receptive?

### 2. SLOWING DOWN TO LIVE WISELY

*"Whoever is slow to anger has great understanding, but he who has a hasty temper exalts folly"* (Proverbs 14:29 ESV).

*"Whoever is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city"* (Proverbs 16:32 ESV).

*"Let what you say be simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything more than this comes from evil"* (Matthew 5:37 ESV).

*"Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock"* (Matt. 7:24-25 ESV).

In my life, I've noticed a clear pattern: the faster my speed of life is, the more of a mess I make of things. **Hurry clouds judgment.**

### Pressure shortens patience.

When everything feels urgent, wisdom often gets left behind.

Jesus never rushed, yet He was never late. His sober-mindedness allowed Him to respond rather than react. Proverbs tells us that wisdom values restraint, while impulsiveness leads to regret. A sober mind slows down long enough to listen, pray, and choose carefully.

Our culture celebrates speed, quick decisions, instant reactions, non-stop productivity. But God often works in stillness. Slowing down isn't laziness; it's discernment. It's choosing thoughtful obedience over hurried action.

**When life accelerates, clarity diminishes.** When we slow our pace, we give God room to direct us. A sober mind resists being driven by urgency and instead is anchored in trust. Where might God be inviting you to slow down so you can respond with wisdom instead of hurry?

### 3. DISCERNING DISTRACTIONS FROM DIRECTION

*"For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding"* (Proverbs 2:6 ESV).

*"An intelligent heart acquires knowledge, and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge"* (Proverbs 18:15 ESV).

*"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will recognise them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles?"* (Matt. 7:15-16 ESV).

*"So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed Him, 'If you abide in My word, you are truly My*

*disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free"* (John 8:31-32 ESV).

I've found that most of my effort goes into identifying what is a distraction compared to Godly direction. **Not everything that demands attention deserves it.** Some things aren't sinful, they're simply sidelining.

There was a season when I was really into a popular video game - don't judge me too hard. I enjoyed playing it with a few friends, but my schedule was already full, and deep down I knew I couldn't justify the time I was giving to it. So I did something simple but important: I asked my wife, Elizabeth, to put the game somewhere I wouldn't know where it was. She did, and it helped more than I expected.

Weeks later, I found myself with a few free hours and thought about that game. I asked Elizabeth where it was, and she said she couldn't find it. In that moment, I knew it was probably for the best.

Jesus repeatedly warned His followers to stay alert, because **distraction is one of the enemy's most effective tools.** A sober mind isn't just avoiding sin; it's discerning what quietly pulls us away from God's best. Direction from God brings peace, clarity, and fruit. Distractions often feel urgent but leave us restless and scattered.

Sometimes it is wisdom to remove access, not just resisting temptation. What has been occupying your attention lately, and is it drawing you toward God or gently pulling you away?

### 4. CHOOSING LESS TO GAIN MORE

*"A man without self-control is like a city broken into and left without*

*Continued on p. 5*

# Bring 'n Welgevallige Offer aan God

Terwyl ek vroegoggend 'n tyd in gebed en toewyding deurbring, sê die Here vir my: "Romeine 12." Dit is waar die frase "welgevallige offer" voorkom. Hy bepaal my by hierdie offer as die God van Rom. 12. Wat omsluit die welgevallige offer aan God? Wat vra die Here van my? En van elke ernstige gelowige wat God van harte wil dien? Begeer jy ook om 'n welgevallige offer aan God te bring terwyl ons nog so onvolmaak is, met al ons foute en gebreke? Troos jou daaraan: Die Woord wat Paulus van die Here ontvang het, geld tot vandag vir ons ook: "...omdat ek juis hierop vertrou, dat Hy wat 'n goeie werk in julle begin het, dit sal voleindig tot op die dag van Jesus Christus" (Filip.1:6). Die Nuwe Vertaling lees: "Ek is veral ook daarvan oortuig dat God, wat die goeie werk in julle begin het, dit end-uit sal voer en dit sal voleindig op die dag wanneer Christus Jesus kom." God sal jou in staat stel om 'n welgevallige offer aan Hom te bring.

My vrou, nog voor haar heengaan, het 'n sweetpakbaadjie gehad met die volgende woorde op die rug geborduur: "Die Here is nog besig met my..." By kommentare lees ek: Dit is 'n bekende Christelike idioom gebaseer op Filippense 1:6. "Dit beteken die draer is nie perfek nie, maak nog foute, maar is besig om geestelik te groei en te verander." En hierdie werk van God gaan voort my hele lewe lank. Hy vorm my en maak my 'n loffer. Sy het met daardie baadjie in die winkel ingegaan en dan kom swart, vroulike werkers na haar toe en maak hulle harte vir haar oop. Sendingwerk volg. En dan praat sy oor Jesus met hulle... Net so sal God ons help om Hom welbehaaglik te wees as ons met opregte harte na Hom toe kom. Hy los ons nie alleen nie. Hy sal ons lei tot geestelike volwassenheid en dit sal aan Hom vreugde bring.

## GOD SE FEESMAAL

Dawid sê in Psalm 23:5: "U berei die tafel voor my aangesig teenoor my teëstanders; U maak my hoof vet met olie; my beker loop oor." In die Nuwe Vertaling staan dit só: "U laat my by 'n feesmaal aansit, terwyl my teëstanders moet toekyk. U ontvang my soos 'n eregas, ek word oorlaai met hartlikheid." En Jesus sê: "Salig is die wat honger en dors na die geregtigheid, want hulle sal versadig word" (Matt. 5:6). Laat ons dan om die tafel van die Vader sit en na die Woord gaan. By die feesmaal is die tafel gedek, en ons ontvang dit met dank, want die Brood van die lewe (lewensbestaansmiddele) is gratis. Dis genade! En ons neem die mes en vurk op en begin happie vir happie op die vurk laai en eet met genoegdoening. Ons moet ons

onderwerp aan God se leiding en lering uit Sy Woord en deur Sy Heilige Gees. Dan sal ons geestelik gevoed word en groei tot volwassenheid. Dit is deel van ons welbehaaglike offer aan Hom.

Die klem val op die Woord soos die Heilige Gees dit aan ons openbaar het, om die Lewende Woord toe te pas. Eerstens vir onself. En wanneer gevoed is aan die tafel van Onse Vader, moet ons dit weer deurgee as 'n getuigenis aan ander geestelike hongerlyendes. Medegelowiges in groot beproewing wat nie herwaarts of derwaarts weet nie, asook iemand, 'n suster en 'n broeder wat weggedwaal het van die Here se pad en hulle in die wildernis bevind, soos die Verlore Seun. Ons welbehaaglike offer sluit in die uitreiking na ander met die geestelike voedsel waarmee God ons voed. Naasteliefde. Dan tref die volgende lied my weer opnuut, waar die Gaithers dit sing:

*My vessel is empty  
Where once I had plenty  
My soul is barren and dry  
Oh but somewhere flows a fountain  
Beyond distant mountain  
Let me drink from the river of life*

*Lord feed Your children  
As we stand here willing  
To eat from the table of life  
Let me drink from the fountain  
That flows from the mountain  
Let me feast from the Father's supply*

*So long I have hungered  
No man could number  
The days that I longed to be  
In a land filled with honey  
Where the rivers are running  
Very soon I will taste and I'll see*

*Lord feed Your children  
As we stand here willing  
To eat from the table of life  
Let me drink from the fountain  
That flows from the mountain  
Let me feast from the Father's supply  
Let me feast from the table of life.*

Maar laat ons terugkeer na die geestelike voedsel van Rom. 12:1-2, "Ek vermaan julle dan, broeders, by die ontferminge van God, 1) dat julle jul liggame stel as 'n lewende, heilige en aan God welgevallige offer - dit is julle redelike godsdiens." En daarmee saam: 2) "En word nie aan hierdie wêreld gelykvormig nie, maar word verander deur die vernuning van julle gemoed, sodat julle kan beproef wat die goeie en welgevallige en volmaakte wil van God is."

Oorpeins, deurdink, internaliseer elke woord wat hierbo onderstreep is. Dit is die sleutel vir 'n weldeurdagte Woord vir jou welgevallige offer.

## VERMAAN

Dit begin hier by die enkele woord "vermaan" (Grieks = Parakaleō), 'n ruim woord met verskillende vertalingsmoontlikhede, en wat altyd binne konteks van die Skrifgedeelte toegepas moet word om die volle waarde te kan bepaal. Dit is asof Paulus met 'n smeekroep na die gemeente kom, en met diep oortuiging mooi te vra. Hy pleit. Hy doen 'n beroep op die gelowiges, hy vra mooi, hy roep hulle nou op tot optrede en om nie passief te bly nie, hy vra baie ernstig, hy versoek ernstig, en hy sê: "I appeal to you," pleidooi, aansporing afhange van die konteks. Een Griekse woordeboek skryf soos volg hieroor: "Parakaleō (werkwoord): Dit is 'n algemene woord wat dikwels vertaal word as "pleit," "vermaan," "aanspoor" of "troos." Om iemand langs jou te roep vir ondersteuning of om rigting aan te dui watter koers jy moet inslaan."

Dit is ook die woord wat gebruik word vir die Heilige Gees wat Jesus in Sy plek sou stuur: Hy is die Paraklētōs (selfstandige naamwoord, ook in Joh. 14-16) wat geroep is om "langsaan te staan" om ons te help om die las te dra, met 'n smeekroep, pleitrede, tot oortuiging te bring, tot optrede en toewyding van die individu om vir God tot diens te wees. Sulke diens is deel van ons welgevallige offer. Dit is dus nie 'n intellektuele aansporing om vir God tot diens te wees nie. Ook nie 'n blote emosionele oproep nie. Maar dit word in geloof aangegryp om tot aksie oor te gaan.

Geloof werk soms deur die intellek, en soms deur die emosie ook. Maar gewoonlik werk dit nie deur wat jy voel nie, ook nie wat jy met jou verstand kan uitwerk nie. Die Woord verklaar: "Die geloof dan is 'n vaste vertroue op die dinge wat ons hoop, 'n bewys van die dinge wat ons nie sien nie" (Heb. 11:1). En ook: "En sonder geloof is dit onmoontlik om God te behaag; want hy wat tot God gaan, moet glo dat Hy is en 'n beloner is van die wat Hom soek" (Heb. 11:6). Of jy voel of nie voel nie. Of jy dink of nie in staat is om te dink nie. Ons geloof en vertroue in Hom is vir God welbehaaglik. Hy sal Hom laat vind as ons in geloof tot Hom keer.

Geloof is die vaste vertroue om God op Sy Woord te neem, Hom te vertrou, te behaag en Sy Hand in beweging te sien en te beleef, met die Heilige Gees saam wanneer ons Hom vra om ons tot hulp te kom. Dit is dán wanneer die las vir ons draagliker word tot die uitkoms toe. Ons vertroue is deel van ons offer. Pas die Woord toe wat die Heilige Gees vir jou oopmaak in jou afsondering en in

jou stiltetyd of Bybelstudie. Soos iemand dit stel, "God said it, I believe it, and that settles it." In my jonger dae het een pastoor 'n drastiese voorbeeld gemaak: Hy het sy Bybel op die vloer neergesit, daarop gaan staan om sy punt tuis te bring en gesê: "Ek staan op die Woord!" Ek het dit nooit vergeet nie. In die Bybel lees ons: "Staan dan vas in die vryheid waarmee Christus ons vrygemaak het, en laat julle nie weer onder die juk van diens-baarheid bring nie" (Gal. 5:1). Ons geloof sal God se hart aanraak en Hy sal dit eer.

## BROEDERS

In die ou Bybelse Grieks (Koine Grieks) wat verskil van moderne Grieks, word 'n gehoor inklusief aangespreek. Dit beteken mans en vrouens en kinders word aangespreek tydens openbare redevoering. Die term "broeders" word gereeld in die Nuwe Testament gebruik, veral in Paulus se briewe en Handeling, om gelowiges aan te spreek, eenheid in Christus te beklemtoon en vermanings of bemoediging oor te dra. Dit dui op 'n hegte familieband binne die vroeë Christelike gemeenskap wat gebaseer is op geloof en vryheid. Ons kan verder ook beklemtoon dat die term "broeders" daarop dui dat die man die priester van sy huis is, en in dié verband sy huisgesin dien as hoof, nie as diktator nie. En so word die familieverband beklemtoon vir die hele gesin. Dink aan die verhaal van Paulus en Silas in die tronk, met kettings aan hulle voete, en hoe hulle lofliedere tot God gesing het. Daar was 'n groot aardbewing. God red hulle. Die tronkbewaarder kom tot bekering en word gedoop. Hy en sy huisgesin. In hierdie verband het dit ook 'n Hebreeuse agtergrond: Aan die einde van sy lewe het Josua voor die volk gestaan en gesê hulle moet elkeen self besluit wie hulle wil dien, en dan vir die volk gesê: "Ek en my huis, ons sal die HERE dien." Afwykings was daar wel, maar dan was dit buite konteks en buite God se bepalings.

Paulus gebruik dikwels "Broeders" om liefdevolle maar direkte onderrig te gee, soos in 1 Thes. 5:4, waar hy alle gelowiges herinner dat hulle kinders van die lig is. Daarom is daar ook ander vertalings wat die vrouens byvoeg, dan word dit so vertaal: "broeders en susters," wat ook kinders insluit. Dit beteken die kinders is onder die voogdyskap van hul ouers totdat hulle volwassenheid bereik. Daarom moet die kinders hulle skik onder die gesag van hul vader, omdat hulle nie volwasse genoeg is om hul eie pad te loop nie. Weer eens is daar uitsonderings. Maar die klem val

*Vervolg op p. 3*

# Bring 'n Welgevallige Offer aan God

## Vervolg van p. 2

op die begrip "broeders en susters wat as 'n eenheid voor God staan met die kinders in 'n geseënde gesin, soos deur die Woord bepaal. Paulus vermaan ons dus as lede van die geestelike huisgesin om ons welbehaaglike offer aan God te bring. In eenheid. Dit kom deur geloof en oorgawe, deur die lering en krag en leiding van die Heilige Gees.

## ONS VERANTWOORDELIKHEID

Jesus het gesê: "Ek het as 'n lig in die wêreld gekom, sodat elkeen wat in My glo, nie in die duisternis sou bly nie" (Joh. 12:46). Dit is die vars lewensbrood wat ek vanoggend by die Vader se tafel gekry en toegepas het. Want Sy Brood is ALTYD vars vir hulle wat dit aanneem. Sy voedsel word nooit oud nie. Dit vergaan nie soos die fisiese manna wat die Here vir Israel in die woestyn gegee het nie. En dit maak ons elkeen wat daarvan eet, 'n geur vir Christus.

God gee ons geestelike wysheid en kennis deurdat Sy Gees die Woord vir ons belig. Dan kan ons hierdie geopenbaarde kennis met ander meedeel. "Maar God sy dank wat ons altyd laat triomfeer in Christus en wat die reuk van Sy kennis deur ons oral versprei. Want ons is 'n aangename geur van Christus tot eer van God onder die wat gered word en onder die wat verlore gaan; vir die laaste 'n reuk van die dood tot die dood, maar vir die eerste 'n reuk van die lewe tot die lewe. En wie is tot hierdie dinge bekwaam? Want ons is nie soos baie wat handel dryf met die woord van God nie; maar as uit opregtheid, maar as uit God, in die teenwoordigheid van God, spreek ons in Christus" (2 Kor. 2:14-17). Oordink hierdie teks, vra die Here om dit deur die salwing van die Heilige Gees toepaslik te maak vir jou, terwyl jy die verdere gedeelte ook oordink. So het ek gedoen, toe bring die Here die volgende lied weer eens tot my in my innerlike menswees, daar waar die Heilige Gees woon, en ek sing dit saam (gegrond op Jesaja 55):

*Ho! everyone that is thirsty in spirit,  
Ho! everyone that is weary and sad;  
Come to the fountain, there's fullness in Jesus,  
All that you're longing for: come and be glad!*

*I will pour water on him that is thirsty,  
I will pour floods upon the dry ground;  
Open your hearts for the gifts I am bringing;  
While ye are seeking Me, I will be found.*

*Child of the world, are you tired of your bondage?  
Weary of Earth's joys, so false, so untrue?  
Thirsting for God and His fullness of blessing?  
Listen to the promise, a message for you!*

*Child of the kingdom, be filled with the Spirit!  
Nothing but fullness thy longing can meet;  
'Tis the endowment for life and for service;  
Thine is the promise, so certain, so sweet.*

Die Here sal ons honger en dors na Hom vervul met Sy lieflike Teenwoordigheid. Hy sal hierdie offers kosbaar ag en na waarde skat. Hy sal die leë kruik met die olie van die Heilige Gees vul.

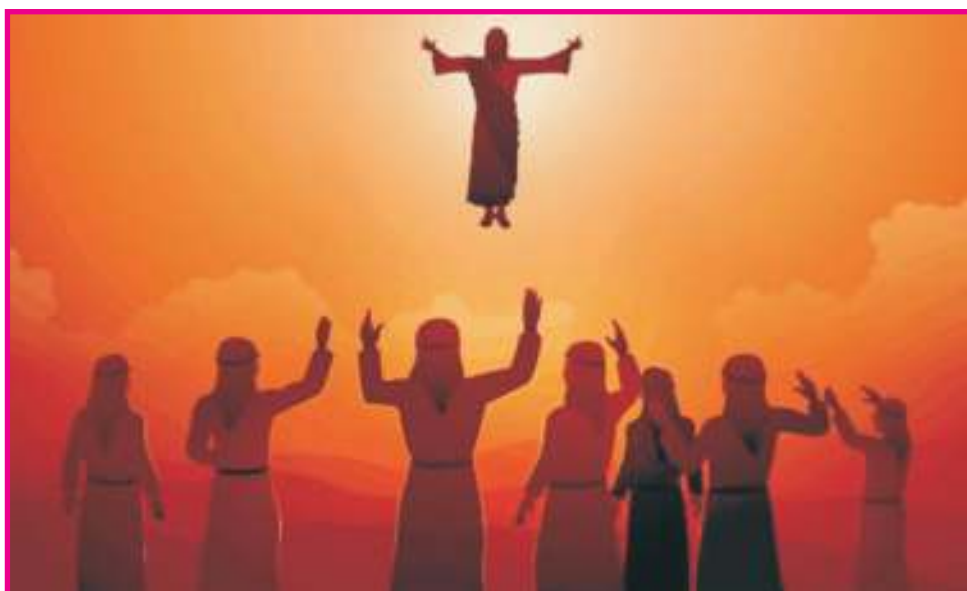
## SAMEVATTING

God praat baie met die gelowiges deur die lied van die Kerk. Deur saam te sing, kom ons in eenheid om God te aanbid en gebeur daar wonderwerke. Selfs Jesus het op die vooraand van Sy kruisiging en op pad na die die kruis, Sy grootste offer aan God die Vader, ná die instelling van die Nagmaal, afgesluit deur saam met Sy dissipels 'n loflied te sing (Joh. 13). Is jy al daar? Bring dan jou wegevallige offer aan God: oorgawe, geestelike groei, vertrouwe, aanneming van Sy Woord en die Heilige Gees se leiding, eenheid, naasteliefde, geloof, verkondiging van Sy Woord, diensbaarheid, gebrokenheid... Daar is so baie aspekte. So het Abraham sy grootste offer gebring toe hy bereid was om sy seun Isak te offer. Sluit aan by hier oorwinnaars-korps in Jesus, deur in geloof vas te gryp - geloof wat Hy in jou geplaas het as gawe van die Heilige Gees (1 Kor. 12:8-10). Leef in oorwinning, geloof, en bring jou offer aan God. Dit sál Hom welgevallig wees!

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## LETSATSI LA TLATLHOSO: TSHOLOFETSO YA JESU GO BOA

(Ascension Day: The promise of Jesus to return)



### LETSATSI LA TLHATLOGO KE ENG?

Letsatsi la Tlhatlogo ke letsatsi le Bakeresete ba gakologelwang gore Jesu Keresete o ne a tthatlo-sediwa kwa legodimong malatsi a le 40 morago ga tsogo ya gagwe. Baengele ba ne ba re ene Jesu yo o tthatlogileng o tla boa gape.

### DITEMANA

"Ene Jesu yo, yo o tthatlosit-sweg kwa legodimong a tswa mo go lona, o tla tla ka tsela e e tshwanang le e lo mmoneng a ya kwa legodimong ka yone" (Ditiro 1:11).

### KAKANYO

Letsatsi la Tlhatlogo le re gakolola

gore Jesu ga a ka a tlogela batho ba gagwe ba se na tsholofelo. O tthatlogetse kwa legodimong, a solofetsa Mowa o o Boitshepo, a baakanyetsa badumedi bonno, mme o tla boa gape.

### 1. Jesu o ne a tthatlogela kwa legodimong.

Ditiro 1:9-11. Jesu o ne a tseelwa kwa godimo a bonala fa pele ga barutwa, mme baengele ba ne ba tlhomamisa gore "Ene Jesu yono" o tla boa.

### 2. Jesu o solofeditse Mowa o o Boitshepo.

Johane 14:26. Mowa o o Boitshepo ke Mothusi wa rona,

Morutisi le Mogomotsi wa rona. Le fa Jesu a ne a tthatloga, badumedi ga ba tlogelelwe.

### 3. Jesu o baakanyetsa badumedi lefelo.

Johane 14:1-3. Jesu o ne a ya go baakanya lefelo mo ntlong ya ga Rara. Legodimo ga se toro; ke tsholofetso ya mmatota.

### 4. Jesu o tla tla gape.

Johane 14:3 le Ditiro 1:11. Ene Jesu yo o tthatlogileng o tla boa. Bakeresete ba tshela ka tsholofelo le go ipaakanyetsa.

### 5. Tsela ya go ipaakanyetsa go boa ga Gagwe.

Baebela ya re, "Gonne Modimo o ratile lefatshe mo go kalo, mo o bileng wa ntsha Morwawe yo o tsetsweng a le esi, gore mongwe le mongwe yo o dumelang mo go ene a se ka a nyelela, mme a nne le botshelo jo bo sa khutleng" (Johane 3:16). Jesu gape o rile, "Yo o utlwang lefoko la me, a dumela mo go yo o nthomileng, o na le botshelo jo bo sa khutleng" (Johane 5:24). Re siametse go boa ga ga Jesu ka go dumela mo go ene, go ikanya lefoko la gagwe, le go tsamaya ka kutlo.

6. Se Letsatsi la Tlhatlogo le re rutang sone.



Johan Zerwick  
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- Jesu ke Morena.
- Mowa o o Boitshepo o naya Kereke maatla.
- Isagwe ya rona e sireletsegile mo go Keresete.
- Re tshwanetse go tshela matshelo a a boitshepo, a tsholofelo le boikanyegi.

### THAPELO

Morena Jesu, ke a go leboga go bo o tthatlogetse kwa legodimong le go go solofetsa gore o tla tla gape. Re thuse go dumela mo go Wena, go tshela ka kutlo, le go nna re ipaakanyeditse go boa ga Gago. Re tlatse ka Mowa wa gago o o Boitshepo mme o boloke dipelo tsa rona di ikanyega go fitlha letsatsi le re tla go bonang ka lone. Ka leina la ga Jesu. Amen.

# Is Ons Spesiaal?

**C**arl Sagan het eens in 'n onderhoud gesê, "Here we are like mites on a plum. ...The plum is this little planet and it goes around an insignificant local star, the sun. And that star is on the obscure outskirts of an ordinary galaxy, the Milky Way, which contains 400 billion other stars. And this galaxy is just one of something of like a 100 billion other galaxies that make up the universe. And it is now beginning to look [like] this universe is one of an enormous number, maybe even an infinite number, of other closed-off universes. So the idea that we are central, that we are the reason there is a universe - is pathetic. We have to simply come to grips with the real universe that we really live in. And some of our myth and some of our religion are innocent with it, it's time to change the myth and the religion."

Daar is wetenskaplikes wat postuleer dat lewe sal ontstaan as die omstandighede 'reg' is. Tog, selfs in hierdie geval skat wetenskaplikes via Drake se vergelyking dat die kans dat intelligente lewe in die heelal bestaan, uitsonderlik klein is: skattings sluit in 0.000000001% tot 0.02% van planete wat intelligente lewe huisves. Onsekerhede op hierdie getal is enorm; sommige argumenteer dat die kans nul ook kan wees. Natuurlik is daar die onderliggende aanname dat lewe ontspring en dan vanself ontwikkel oor biljoene jare heen. Ons glo egter dat God 'n unieke skeping van mense na Sy Beeld gemaak het, en dit op die planeet aarde.

Vir baie jare het mense geglo dat die aarde die middelpunt van die heelal is. Hierdie 'geosentriese siening' van Ptolemeus het vir eeue gedomineer totdat Copernicus, Galileo, Kepler en later Newton die 'heliosentriese model' gevestig het wat die son in die middel van die sonnestelsel geplaas het. Dit het gelei tot dramatiese verskuiwings in die mens se siening van homself, sy waarde, en die betekenis van die lewe.

Ons leer al deur meer van ons heelal. Daar is so baie stemme vandag, en baie van hulle klink wys en korrek en wetenskaplik. Dit is goed om kennis te neem van die nuutste ontdekkings maar ook van die beperkings en onsekerhede wat daar steeds is. Hierdie ontwikkelinge lei egter tot eksistensiële vrae. Ons kan onself vandag steeds afvra: Wat beteken my lewe? Hoekom is ek hier? Waarheen is ek op pad?

Hoewel die wetenskap baie dinge kan beskryf (die 'hoe'), kan dit nie ten diepste die 'hoekom'-vrae beantwoord nie. Laat ons kyk na Jesus se identiteit, roeping, en hart van liefde - want daarin vind ons as gelowiges ook ons identiteit, roeping, en wysheid van hoe om te lewe.

## 1. JESUS SE IDENTITEIT

Die Evangelis Johannes skryf die volgende, "Want die wet is deur Moses gegee; die genade en die waarheid het deur Jesus Christus gekom. Niemand het ooit God gesien nie; die eniggebore Seun wat in die boesem van die Vader is, dié het Hom verklaar" (Joh. 1:17-18).

Jesus het in die wêreld ingekom om die Vader aan ons te openbaar. Die wet was 'n skaduwee van en heenwysing na die dinge wat sou kom. In Jesus het ons die volle openbaring van God se liefde en saligheidsplan gekry. Dit was die hoogste doel van die Menswording van Jesus: om die sigbare openbaring van God onder mense te wees.

Elders het Jesus gesê, "Alles is aan My oorgegee deur My Vader, en niemand ken die Seun nie, behalwe die Vader; ook ken niemand die Vader nie, behalwe die Seun en elkeen aan wie die Seun dit wil openbaar" (Matt. 11:27). Jesus is die Verteenwoordiger van die Vader, Sy gelykenis, Sy Seun. Inderdaad getuig die Vader ook hiervan tydens Jesus se doop, "En nadat Jesus gedoop was, het Hy dadelik uit die water opgeklim, en met eens gaan die hemele vir Hom oop, en Hy sien die Gees van God soos 'n duif neerdaal en op Hom kom. En daar kom 'n Stem uit die hemele wat sê: Dit is My geliefde Seun in Wie Ek 'n welbehag het" (Matt. 3:16-17). Ons sien ook die Gees op Jesus neerdaal; dus sien ons 'n lieflike prentjie van die Drie-eenheid op die vooraand van Jesus se aardse bediening.

Die wonderlike beeld van die Goeie Herder spreek nogeens van Jesus se identiteit en lewenstaak: "Jesus het toe weer vir hulle gesê: Voorwaar, voorwaar Ek sê vir julle, Ek is die deur van die skape. Almal wat voor My gekom het, is diewe en rowers; maar die skape het nie na hulle geluister nie. Ek is die deur; as iemand deur My ingaan, sal hy gered word, en hy sal ingaan en uitgaan en weiding vind. Die dief kom net om te steel en te slag en te verwoes. Ek het gekom, dat hulle lewe en oorfloed kan hê. Ek is die goeie herder. Die goeie herder lê Sy lewe af vir die skape" (Joh. 10:7-

11).

Dit is duidelik dat Jesus Homself (hier en elders in die Skrif) openbaar as die Seun van God: "Daarom het die Vader My lief, omdat Ek My lewe aflê om dit weer te neem. Niemand neem dit van My af nie, maar Ek lê dit uit Myself af. Ek het mag om dit af te lê en Ek het mag om dit weer te neem. Hierdie gebod het Ek van My Vader ontvang" (Joh. 10:17-18).

## 2. JESUS SE ROEPING

Soos reeds hierbo aangeraak, het Jesus vir 'n baie spesifieke rede na die aarde toe gekom. Sy identiteit en Sy roeping gaan hand aan hand. In Johannes 12 lees ons meer hieroor, "En Jesus het uitgeroep en gesê: Wie in My glo, glo nie in My nie, maar in Hom wat My gestuur het. En wie My aanskou [Strong: to behold, to observe, to look at, to perceive], aanskou Hom wat My gestuur het. Ek het as 'n lig in die wêreld gekom, sodat elkeen wat in My glo, nie in die duisternis sou bly nie. En as iemand na My woorde luister en nie glo nie, Ek oordeel hom nie; want Ek het nie gekom om die wêreld te oordeel nie, maar om die wêreld te red" (Joh. 12:44-47). Jesus het gekom om die mensdom te red van die sonde en die dood.

Paulus beaam hierdie roeping van Christus verskeie kere in die boek Romeine. "Daarom dan, net soos dit deur een misdaad vir alle mense tot veroordeling gekom het, so ook is dit deur een daad van geregtigheid vir alle mense tot regverdigmaking van die lewe. Want soos deur die ongehoorsaamheid van die een mens [Adam] baie tot sondaars gestel is, so sal ook deur die gehoorsaamheid van die Één [Jesus] baie tot regverdiges gestel word" (Rom. 5:18-19). Paulus voeg egter 'n tydsdimensie (geskiedkundigheid) by: "Want toe ons nog swak was, het Christus op die regte tyd vir die goddelose gesterwe" (Rom. 5:6). "As ons dan saam met Christus gesterf het, glo ons dat ons ook saam met Hom sal lewe, omdat ons weet dat Christus, nadat Hy opgewek is uit die dode, nie meer sterf nie. Die dood heers oor Hom nie meer nie. Want die dood wat Hy gesterf het, het Hy vir die sonde eens en vir altyd gesterwe; maar die lewe wat Hy leef, leef Hy vir God" (Rom. 6:8-10).

Die Hebreërskrywer voeg sy getuienis by bogenoemde wanneer hy oor Jesus se roeping skryf, "Want Hy getuig: U is priester vir ewig volgens die orde van Melgisédek. En hulle het wel priesters geword in 'n groot aan-

tal, omdat hulle [die Levitiese priesters] deur die dood verhinder is om aan te bly; maar Hy, omdat Hy vir ewig bly, besit 'n priesterskap wat nie op ander oorgaan nie.

Daarom kan Hy ook volkome red die wat deur Hom tot God gaan, omdat Hy altyd leef om vir hulle in te tree. Want so 'n Hoëpriester was vir ons gepas, een wat heilig, onskuldig, onbesmet, afgeskeie van die sondaars is, en wat hoër as die hemele geword het; wat nie elke dag nodig het, soos die hoëpriesters, om eers vir Sy Eie sondes offers te bring en dan vir dié van die volk nie. Want dit het Hy net een maal gedoen toe Hy Homself geoffer het" (Heb. 7:17, 23-27).

Die Joodse priesterdom het bestaan uit Leviete, nakomelinge van Levi, die seun van Jakob. Omdat hulle sterflike mense was, moes die seuns die priesterskap by die vaders oorneem, sodat dit kon voortbestaan. Jesus is egter die ewige Seun van God. Hy is geroep tot 'n ewige priesterskap volgens die orde van Melgisédek ('n koning-priester van God in Salem of Jerusalem; Gen. 14:18-20), soos ook deur die psalmis beskrywe (Ps. 110:4).

Ons kan nog baie sê, maar laat ons fokus op die doel en tyd van Jesus se priesterdom: Hy is die volmaakte, ewige Hoëpriester wat eenmaal vir ons sondes gesterf het en só Sy offer aan die Vader gebring het wat vir ons die vrede bewerkstellig het. So lees ons ook in Heb. 9:24-28, "Want Christus het nie ingegaan in 'n heiligdom met hande gemaak, 'n teëbeeld van die ware nie, maar in die hemel self om nou voor die aangesig van God vir ons te verskyn; ook nie om Homself dikwels te offer, soos die hoëpriester elke jaar in die heiligdom ingaan met bloed wat nie sy eie is nie, want dan moes Hy dikwels gely het van die grondlegging van die wêreld af. Maar nou het Hy een maal in die voleinding van die eeue verskyn om die sonde deur Sy offer weg te doen.

En net soos die mense bestem is om een maal te sterwe en daarna die oordeel, so sal Christus ook, nadat Hy een maal geoffer is om die sondes van baie weg te neem, vir die tweede maal sonder sonde verskyn aan die wat Hom ver wag tot saligheid" (Heb. 9:24-28).

'n Mens kan nou spekulêr oor lewe elders in die heelal en oor volmaaktheid en sonde en geregtigheid en oordeel... Maar hierdie feit staan vas: Jesus het eens op 'n tyd, soos bevestig deur so baie

# Finding God in the Silence

Continued from p. 1

walls" (Proverbs 25:28 ESV).

"Whoever guards his mouth preserves his life; he who opens wide his lips comes to ruin" (Proverbs 13:3 ESV).

"Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Matthew 26:41 ESV).

"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" (Luke 12:35-36 ESV).

"Be on guard, keep awake. For you do not know when the time will come. 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 13:33-37 ESV).

In my life, I've learned a hard but freeing truth: 'more' often means compromise; 'less' often means more. More commitments, more voices, more options can slowly dilute faith and conviction.

Jesus consistently invited people

to a narrow path, not because life is smaller there, but because it's clearer. A sober mind understands that limits protect what matters most. **Self-control isn't about restriction; it's about alignment.**

When we chase "more," we often sacrifice peace, integrity, or spiritual attentiveness. But when we simplify, we gain clarity. **Less noise makes room for God's Voice.** Less clutter creates space for obedience.

Sober-minded believers aren't **driven by excess; they're guided by purpose. They choose depth over volume and faithfulness over frenzy.** What might God be asking you to simplify so your life reflects greater clarity and conviction?

## 5. LIVING WITH THE END IN MIND

"Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the Lord that will stand" (Proverbs 19:21 ESV).

"The plans of the diligent lead surely to abundance, but everyone who is hasty comes only to poverty" (Proverbs 21:5 ESV).

"And He said to all, 'If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself? For whoever is ashamed of Me and of My words, of Him will the Son of

Man be ashamed when He comes in His glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. But I tell you truly, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God'" (Luke 9:23-27 ESV).

"Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a cry, 'Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.'

Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise answered, saying, 'Since there will not be enough for us and for you, go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves.'

And while they were going to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut. Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' But he answered, 'Truly, I say to you, I do not know you.' Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour" (Matthew 25:1, 3-13 ESV).

"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on Earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves

do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matt. 6:19-21 ESV).

I often think about standing before the Lord at the end of my life and asking, "What would He say about this moment?" That question has a way of sharpening focus. **Sober-minded living keeps eternity in view.**

Jesus regularly reminded His followers to live ready, to watch, to stay awake, to invest in what lasts. When we remember that our lives are accountable to God, it changes how we think, choose, and live.

A sober mind doesn't live for the temporary approval of people but for the eternal pleasure of God. It evaluates moments through the lens of faithfulness. What feels small today may matter greatly in eternity.

Living with the end in mind brings freedom. It helps us prioritise obedience over comfort and faithfulness over popularity. If you viewed today through the lens of eternity, what choice would you make differently?

- Joon Tavarez

[www.faithfamilyweekly.com](http://www.faithfamilyweekly.com)

If you viewed today through the lens of eternity, what choice would you make differently?

## IN HIS PRESENCE

**A**s a little girl I loved nothing better than to snuggle into my father's arm and demand a story. How well do I remember those treasured moments. Those adventure-filled stories from his childhood, Joe Freckles, Billy the Kid and many more remain with me to this day.

Today I realise it was his love, his presence that gave substance to the "preciousness factor". Even though he left us long ago, those memories still linger and I clearly remember melting into his side, his arm around me.

The loss I experienced as I had to deal with missing him at times felt like desperation: how will I cope

without my wise mentor?

I soon realised that I was not an orphan, I was not in any degree Fatherless. As I sought my heavenly Father's Presence I would find reminders of His Presence time and again.

Finding Scriptures that kindled a brand-new aspect in my spiritual life, the peace of His indwelling Presence filled me with the assurance that I was in no way left defenseless. There was so much joy in finding what seemed like a direct message to me.

David, ever pursuing God's Presence wrote, "You make known to me the path of life; in

Your Presence there is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore" (Psalm 16:11).

What comforting assurance! If you have a deep need to experience His loving Presence, James has a word for you, "Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you" (James 4:8). May pursuing God's Presence become the "main thing" in our lives as we boldly approach Him in need of peace and comfort. Hebrews 13:5 confirms this: "... God has said, 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.'" Seek His Presence and find every need of your life fulfilled!

- Helen du Plessis, 083 332 0895



Helen du Plessis

# Is Ons Spesiaal?

## Vervolg van p. 4

Bybelse en buite-Bybelse getuie-nis en ook deur die Gees se getuie-nis in ons harte (Rom. 8:16), na die aarde gekom om vir ons sondes te sterwe. Eens en vir altyd. Na die planeet Aarde. En Hy het daarna hierdie oorwinnig verseël met Sy opstanding. Dit is onbeskryflik besonders en spesiaal!

## 3. JESUS SE LIEFDE

Daar is 'n kosbare verhaal (en dit word bevestig deur o.a. Billy Graham en RE Olson) dat die bekende teoloog, dr Karl Barth, homself eens in die Rockefeller-kapel op die kampus van die Universiteit van Chicago bevind het tydens sy toer na die VSA in 1962. Na sy lesing het 'n student tydens vraetyd hom gevra of hy sy lewenswerk in een sin kon opsom. Hy het geantwoord, "Ja, ek kan. Jesus min my salig lot, ek weet dit uit die Woord van God ['Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so]."

Hoe insiggewend: uit al die grootse teologiese waarhede ontsluit deur jarelange studie, kies dr Barth om by die eenvoudige maar ook diep waarheid te bly en soos 'n kind te glo: Jesus het my lief en deur Sy sterwe en opstanding kan ek nou 'n kind van God word (Joh. 1:12).

Hier sien ons Jesus se liefde - dat Hy bereid was om vir ons te sterwe. En ons sien ook die Vader se liefde: dat Hy bereid was om Sy enigste Seun vir ons op te offer. "God het ons tog nie bestem om gestraf te word nie, maar om deur ons Here Jesus Christus verlos te word. Hy het ter wille van ons

gesterwe, sodat ons, of ons by Sy koms nog lewe of reeds dood is, saam met Hom kan lewe" (1 Tess. 5:9-10 NV).

Paulus skryf, "Hy wat selfs Sy Eie Seun nie gespaar het nie, maar Hom vir ons almal oorgegee het, hoe sal Hy nie saam met Hom ons ook alles genadiglik skenk nie?" (Rom. 8:32). Kyk net hoe vol liefde is God se Vaderhart: "Die Here verdraag nie die belofte [van Jesus se wederkoms] soos sommige dit verdragting ag nie, maar Hy is lankmoedig oor ons en wil nie hê dat sommige moet vergaan nie, maar dat almal tot bekering moet kom" (2 Pet. 3:9). God wil hê dat almal tot redding moet kom!

Paulus skryf ten slotte, "...maar God bewys Sy liefde tot ons daarin dat Christus vir ons gesterf het toe ons nog sondaars was. Veel meer dan sal ons, nou dat ons geregtig is in Sy bloed, deur Hom gered word van die toorn. Want as ons, terwyl ons nog vyande was, met God versoen is deur die dood van Sy Seun, veel meer sal ons deur Sy lewe gered word nou dat ons versoen is. En nie alleen dit nie, maar ons roem ook in God deur onse Here Jesus Christus, deur Wie ons nou die versoening verkry het" (Rom. 5:8-11).

Kyk watter groot liefde het die Vader ons bewys: Hy verander ons van vyande na vriende, van vreemdes na Sy kinders, van sondaars na heiliges, van geestelike dooies na lewendes, van verlore nes tot gevondes, van afgeskeides na versoendes, en van veroordeeldes na geregtigdes! Laat ons Sy groot

Naam en Sy goedheid prys!

## 4. "THE SOUL KNEW ITS WORTH"

Die bekende kerslied, "O holy night" vind ons die volgende woorde wat die gevolg van Jesus se geboorte, dood en opstanding mooi saamvat: "Long lay the world in sin and error pining, 'til He appeared and the soul felt its worth."

Toe Jesus na die aarde gekom het en Sy verlossingswerk volbring het, en dit uit Goddelike liefde, het ons siele gewaargeword dat Hy ons na waarde geag het en bereid was om tot die uiterste toe te gaan om ons met God te versoen! Ons is spesiaal en waardevol vir Hom.

Maar nog was God nie klaar nie. Bo en behalwe die geskenk van Sy Seun, Jesus, gee die Vader ook nou die geskenk van Sy Gees aan ons. Sy Gees woon in die harte van gelowiges: "Daar is dan nou geen veroordeling vir die wat in Christus Jesus is nie, vir die wat nie na die vlees wandel nie, maar na die Gees. En as die Gees van Hom wat Jesus uit die dode opgewek het, in julle woon, dan sal Hy wat Christus uit die dode opgewek het, ook julle sterflike liggame lewend maak deur Sy Gees wat in julle woon" (Rom. 8:1,11). Paulus beaam in 1 Korinthiërs, "Weet julle nie dat julle 'n tempel van God is en die Gees van God in julle woon nie?" (1 Kor. 3:16). "Of weet julle nie dat julle liggaam 'n tempel is van die Heilige Gees wat in julle is, wat julle van God het, en dat julle nie aan juiself behoort nie? Want julle is duur gekoop. Verheerlik God dan in julle liggaam en in julle

gees wat aan God behoort" (1 Kor. 6:19-20).

Laastens lees ons, "Want almal wat deur die Gees van God gelei word, dié is kinders van God. Die Gees Self getuig saam met ons gees dat ons kinders van God is; en as ons kinders is, dan ook erfgename, erfgename van God en mede-erfgename van Christus, as ons naamlik saam met Hom ly, sodat ons ook saam met Hom verheerlik kan word" (Rom. 8:14, 16, 17). Saam met die Gees het God aan ons ook die ewige lewe geskenk!

## SAMEVATTING

Hoe ongelooflik is die goeie nuus, die evangelie, wat aan ons verkondig word deur die Skrifwoord: Jesus, die enigste Seun van God, het eens en vir altyd aarde toe gekom sodat ons die ewige lewe kan beërwe - vry van sonde en smet en smart! Hy het Sy Gees in ons harte uitgestort en ons tot Sy kinders verseël. As ons ooit gewonder het of ons waardevol vir God is, kan ons hierdie waarheid ter harte neem en hoef ons nooit weer aan Sy liefde vir ons te twyfel nie.

Maar nou kom ons by nog 'n waarheid: Ons is spesiaal en kosbaar want God is spesiaal, uniek, wonderlik en onbeskryflik! Wie is soos Hy? Wie het so 'n hart van liefde en goedheid? Wie het ons kom soek en vind en opgetrek uit die modderige slyk van sonde? Hoe kan ons dan anders as om Hom lief te hê, om Hom in nederige dankbaarheid te volg en te dien, en hierdie liefde ook met ander te deel?

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# An Encounter With God

"So I was left alone, gazing at this great vision, I had no strength left, my face turned deathly pale and I was helpless" (Daniel 10:8).

Daniel received a vision that troubled him greatly. He wanted understanding of this vision. He set out to understand the vision by fasting for three weeks. Three days after his three weeks of fasting, a messenger of God appeared to Daniel. The messenger explained that Heaven had heard his prayer from the first day, but the angel was temporarily prevented from coming by the prince of Persia, a demon angel, who sought to thwart God's messenger from coming to

Daniel.

There are times in our lives when we must seek God with all our hearts. It is in these times that we hear from Heaven in ways we may never have experienced before. Daniel's perseverance in prayer was rewarded with a personal encounter with Heaven. However, in order to receive from God, Daniel had to be left alone, have his strength removed, and be placed in a helpless condition.

When we have no ability in our own strength to move Heaven or the events around us, we are in position to hear from Heaven. It is the acknowledgment of our

humanity and our frailness that places us in a position to have a personal encounter with the living God.

Do you need a personal encounter with God today? Do you need God to intervene on your behalf?

Seek Him with all your heart! Demonstrate to Him that you are serious. Get alone and acknowledge your helpless condition before Him. He will reward you with His Presence!

- TGIF: Today God Is First, Vol. 1, Os Hillman

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# Finding God in Serving Others

## Love in action is the most powerful sermon we can preach

### 1. A HEART OPENED TO COMPASSION

We often feel the tug on our hearts, a gentle (or sometimes insistent) call to help those in need. The world presents us with a constant stream of challenges faced by our fellow human beings: poverty, hunger, injustice, loneliness. Overwhelmed, we might wonder, "Where do I even begin?" Or perhaps, we question if our efforts will truly make a difference. This feeling is natural, but it doesn't have to be paralyzing. In fact, it can be the very catalyst that propels us into a deeper, more meaningful relationship with God and with the world around us.

**The desire to help others is, in its purest form, a reflection of God's Own heart.** He is a God of justice, mercy, and unwavering love for His creation. When we feel that stirring within us, it is the Holy Spirit prompting us to participate in His divine work. As 1 John 3:17 reminds us, "If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but withholds compassion from them, how can the love of God be in that person?"

This isn't meant to be a burden, but rather an invitation to experience the joy and fulfilment that comes from aligning ourselves with God's purposes.

### 2. BEYOND THE DONATION: ACTIVE FAITH

Giving financially is undoubtedly a crucial part of helping those in need. It provides resources and support to organisations and individuals working on the front lines. **However, true service goes beyond simply making a donation.** It involves actively engaging with the needs of others, offering our time, talents, and presence. This is where faith truly becomes action.

Consider the story of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:25-37. The Samaritan didn't just acknowledge the injured man on the side of the road; he took the initiative to care for him, bandaging his wounds, providing transportation, and paying for his lodging. This is a powerful illustration of what it means to love our neighbour as ourselves. It requires us to step outside of our comfort zones, to get our hands dirty, and to invest ourselves in the lives of others.

Furthermore, James 2:15-16 poignantly states, "Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, 'Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,' but does

nothing about their physical needs, what good is it?" Words of encouragement are valuable, but they must be coupled with tangible actions. We are called to be the hands and feet of Christ, meeting the practical needs of those around us.

### 3. DISCOVERING YOUR UNIQUE ROLE

The beauty of service is that it takes countless forms. God has uniquely gifted each of us with different talents, passions, and resources. He calls us to use these gifts to serve others in ways that are meaningful and fulfilling. Perhaps you have a knack for teaching, a passion for cooking, or a talent for building things. These skills can be used to empower and uplift those in need.

**Don't underestimate the power of small acts of kindness.** A listening ear, a helping hand, a word of encouragement can make a world of difference in someone's life. As Mother Teresa famously said, "Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love." It is in these seemingly insignificant moments that we often encounter God in profound ways.

One way to start is by identifying the needs in your own community. Are there food banks that need volunteers? Shelters that need supplies? Organisations that need help with fundraising or administrative tasks? Pray for discernment and ask God to lead you to the opportunities that are right for you. He will open doors and provide the resources you need to make a difference.

### 4. OVERCOMING OBSTACLES: FEAR AND DISCOURAGEMENT

The path of service is not always easy. We may encounter obstacles such as fear, discouragement, and a lack of resources. We might feel inadequate or overwhelmed by the enormity of the needs around us. It is during these times that we must cling to our faith and remember that we are not alone. God is with us every step of the way, providing the strength and guidance we need to persevere.

Fear often whispers doubts in our ears: "What if I fail?" "What if I don't have enough to give?" "What if I get hurt?" These fears are natural, but they don't have to control us. We can overcome them by focusing on God's love and trusting in His provision. As Philippians 4:13 assures us, "I can do all things through Christ Who strengthens me."

Discouragement can also creep

in when we don't see immediate results. We might feel like our efforts are futile or that we are not making a real difference. It is important to remember that change takes time, and that every act of kindness, no matter how small, contributes to the greater good. Galatians 6:9 reminds us, "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."

To combat discouragement, seek out fellowship with other believers who are passionate about serving others. Share your experiences, offer encouragement, and pray for one another. Together, you can create a support system that will help you stay motivated and focused on your mission.

### 5. THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF SERVICE

Serving others is not just about helping those in need; it is also about transforming ourselves. When we step outside of our own self-centeredness and focus on the needs of others, we gain a new perspective on life. We learn to appreciate the blessings we have and to cultivate gratitude for the simple things. We develop empathy, compassion, and a deeper understanding of the human condition.

In Matthew 25:40, Jesus says, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of Mine, you did for Me." **When we serve others, we are serving Christ Himself.** This is a profound truth that should inspire us to approach every act of service with humility, reverence, and love. Moreover, as we serve, we often

find that we receive far more than we give. We experience the joy of making a difference, the satisfaction of using our gifts for good, and the deep connection that comes from sharing our lives with others. Service is a powerful antidote to loneliness, isolation, and despair. It fills our lives with purpose, meaning, and hope.

**The path of service is a lifelong journey, not a destination.** There will be times when we stumble, times when we feel overwhelmed, and times when we question our calling. But through it all, we can trust that God is with us, guiding us, and empowering us to make a difference in the world. Let us embrace the opportunity to serve others with open hearts, knowing that in doing so, we are not only helping those in need, but we are also drawing closer to God and fulfilling our purpose in life. Remember the words of Proverbs 19:17, "Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and He will reward them for what they have done." Let us strive to be faithful stewards of the gifts we have been given, using them to bless others and to glorify God's Name. Let us live a life of service, a life of love, a life that reflects the heart of Christ!

Ultimately, remember that the greatest act of service is to share the Good News of Jesus Christ. By introducing others to the saving grace of God, we offer them the ultimate hope and the promise of eternal life. Let your actions and your words point others to the love and redemption found in Christ alone. Let your life be a testament to the transformative power of faith in action!

<https://faithactivist.com>

## Word 'n Naaste

"Wie van hierdie drie is volgens jou die naaste van hom wat onder die rowers verval het?" Die wetgeleerde antwoord: 'Die man wat aan hom medelye bewys het.' Toe sê Jesus vir hom: 'Gaan maak jy ook so' (Lukas 10:36-37 NV).

Jesus draai die vraag om: Dit gaan nie oor "Wie is my naaste?" nie, maar "Vir wie is ek 'n naaste?" Hier leer ons die kern van die evangelie: **Liefde is nie 'n konsep nie - dit is 'n keuse.** Jesus het vir ons 'n naaste geword. Nou roep Hy ons om dieselfde te doen.

Gaan vandag doelbewus uit en wees iemand se naaste. Moenie wag nie. Liefde wag nie - liefde beweeg!

Kom ons bid saam: Here, dankie dat U my eerste liefgehad het. Help my om daardie liefde uit te leef na ander. Gebruik my as 'n instrument van U genade. Amen.

Mag jy vandag uitstap as iemand wat liefde beliggaam - 'n ware naaste, gedryf deur Christus se hart.

- Past. Johan Nortje

# My Beloved and My Friend

I was in my twenties when I discovered three Greek words for love: *Eros* is the physical, sensual love. (This word is not actually found in the Bible; however, it is vividly described in The Song of Songs.) *Phileo* is the kind of love between friends, or brotherly love. Then there is *agape*, the selfless, sacrificial, unconditional kind of love. *Agape* perfectly describes the love God has for us.

As this was presented to me, it seemed that *agape* was the only kind of love worthy of pursuit. THAT'S A BIG MISTAKE. ESPECIALLY IN A MARRIAGE. You might begin to think that you are commanded to love your wife, but you don't have to like her!

Dr. John Gottman, one of the foremost marriage experts in the world, concurs with the wisdom of the wife in the Song of Solomon. After studying over six hundred married couples, he concluded: "Happy marriages are based on a deep friendship. By this I mean a mutual respect for and enjoyment of each other's company. These couples tend to know each other intimately - they are well versed in each other's likes, dislikes, personality quirks, hopes, and dreams. They have an abiding regard for each other and express this fondness not just in the big ways, but in little ways day in and day out."<sup>1</sup>

A holistic understanding of the Scriptures and how all the truth of God's Word applies to marriage is critical. For instance, the phrase

"This is my beloved, this is my friend" (Song of Songs 5: 16 NIV) from the Song of Solomon reminds me of the words of Jesus when He said, "Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends" (John 15: 13 NIV). From there I see a connection to this: "Love must be sincere .... Be devoted to one another in love. Honour one another above your-selves" (Rom. 12:9-10 NIV). There are hundreds of Scriptures like these that don't specifically mention the topic of marriage, but they are absolutely relevant.

## HOW CAN YOU AMP UP FRIENDSHIP IN YOUR MARRIAGE?

Start by applying all the truth you discover in God's Word, not just specific verses that contain the words marriage, husbands, or wives. Here are just a few examples:

Philippians 2:3-4 says, "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others" (NIV). Clearly, there is a sacrificial, *agape* kind of love in that, but I also see a companionship - the kind of love between friends that motivates you to continually discover each other's interests and enjoy them together.

The Bible instructs husbands to love their wives as "Christ loved the Church and gave Himself up for her" (Eph. 5:25, NIV). That is a noble pursuit, but a husband's primary assignment is not just to



physically stand between his wife and harm's way. Sometimes, I think it feels easier to physically die for your wife than it is to go on living and to die to yourself daily, intentionally discovering her needs and interests and putting them above your own.

Colossians 3: 13 says, "Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you" (NIV). That's what true friends do. Just as God has extended grace to us, now we are extensions of His grace to others. Nowhere should that be more evident than between husbands and wives.

In John 13: 14 says, "Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet" (NIV). Why wouldn't a husband who loves his wife as Christ loved the Church think of applying this prin-

ciple to his wife first - his beloved and his friend? Friendship in marriage must be intentionally cultivated. Friends don't automatically grow together, but without attention they can easily grow apart. A loving friendship in marriage can survive many things, but it cannot survive neglect.

My wife and I are closing in on 27 years of marriage. Is that a great marriage? I think it's a really good one. We still have much to learn about being friends. When we were dating, I would sometimes say, "I need to talk to Dana, my friend." Those were times when I needed some unfiltered conversational companionship. As it turned out, that was a big need in her life too. Still is. I love her deeply. She is my beloved and my friend.

<sup>1</sup>John M. Gottman, The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work (New York: Harmony, 2000).  
- Tierce Green

## "Did Jesus Really Say That?"

Don, did Jesus really say that He was the only way, and that there's no other way to God?

Yes. He said He was the way, the truth, and the life, and that no one comes to the Father except through Him. Jesus even called Himself the door that we have go through to get to God.

How can that be true if there are so many other religions? It is surprisingly narrow, isn't it?

Yes, it is. But I am thinking that your real problem with what Jesus said isn't with its narrowness.

What do you mean?

Well, where do you work?

A software company.

Is there some sort of security clearance necessary to enter?

Yes, I use a key fob.

And the key fob shows that you have been granted the right to enter the doors by those who own the business. Otherwise, you couldn't get in, right?

Right.

Doors are like that. They're narrow and they aren't open to everyone. How many doors in your own neighbourhood are open to you?

Hmm. One.

Right, your own. And that's okay. There are some famous doors of the world that are shut to us - like at No. 10 Downing Street or the White House.

So where are you going with all of this?

Well, when you consider doors - whether they are in your neighbourhood, your workplace, or the White House - you can only enter

if you have been granted the right to enter by those who own the place. So, when Jesus calls Himself the door, He is saying that He is the One Who has the authority to get us to God.

Okay, but why is Jesus the only One Who can get us to God?

Great question! God is perfect and holy, and He doesn't want where He lives to be muddied with evil and sin like we see on Earth. Earlier you said you worked for a software company. So, you've probably seen that the rooms where they make computer chips can't be contaminated by what's on the outside. The Bible says that we have been contaminated by sin and that, try as we might, we can't clean ourselves. We need Someone else to do that for us.

So that's where Jesus comes in? Exactly. Jesus was the only sinless Person to ever walk the earth, and because His death paid the penalty for our sins, He is only One Who can forgive ours, make us clean, and give us the right to enter into God's Presence for eternity. Is Jesus a narrow door? Perhaps, but that's okay, when we know He's willing to let anyone in who looks to Him for forgiveness.

- Don Barkley

<https://reachothers.org/did-jesus-say-that>

Don is the Director of Staff Training at Search and over the last 40 years has led hundreds of discussions about God and life in homes, businesses, country clubs and colleges. With his wife Ann, Don enjoys visiting their kids and grandkids.

# Seven Ways a Husband Can Take Initiative in Showing Love to His Wife

**H**usband, you're not your wife's sinless, all-wise redeemer. She has one: Christ. Yet Christ died to save the Church and to make the Church holy before the Father. That was His aim and ambition (Eph. 5:25-27). **Likewise, helping your wife become holy and one with you must be your uppermost aim and ambition in marriage.**

In other words, brother, when you wake up in a funk, or get to the end of a long day and you're exhausted, or sit and watch her do that thing that annoys you, or she fails to meet your expectations about something, or she spends too much money, or when the well of romantic feelings seems to run a little dry, or even when she fails you in more dramatic ways, you do not sit back and sulk and say, "I'm not satisfied. I'm not happy. I'm not fulfilled." No, these things are what you expect because God

intends you to be the one who loves right there in her sin and folly and (at times) spiritual ugliness in order to love her toward the working out of her redemption. That's your job. That's your purpose in her life. When you said, "I do," you said "I do" to actively preparing her for her coming Redeemer by showing her what He will look like. That means:

1. You take the initiative in ending arguments by choosing gracious (if need be, apologetic) words. You have nothing left to prove. You are done with self-justification because you are justified in Christ!
2. You take the initiative in spiritual leadership in the home in order to "[cleanse] her by the washing of water with the Word" (Eph. 5:26).
3. You don't have to require perfection of her today. You're playing the long game. The question is

not whether you can get her to be a perfect wife today. The question is whether you can help her look more like Jesus over the next fifty years by acting like Jesus yourself.

4. Even when she is behaving toward you in some way that is frustrating and perhaps sinful, you take the initiative in exemplifying the patience and forgiveness of Christ. That is how Christ has loved you.

5. If she identifies patterns of sin in your life, especially those that have ripple-effects in the lives of those around you, do not immediately brush her off or become defensive. Rather acknowledge the gracious gift that her wisdom and insight can be to your own sanctification.

6. She is your number one priority, more than friends, work, parents, career aspirations, and hobbies. Christ didn't lay His life down for anyone else - only the Church.

7. You may never, ever use your authority in any way to hurt or abuse her, for Christ has never abused you. Love her more than your professional ambitions, your cherished dreams, your adolescent expectations of marriage, your strongly-held convictions about who should do what with the toilet seat or how an onion should be cut or who wronged whom first in that last argument.

Love her as your own body, says Paul. She is bone of your bone and flesh of your flesh, says Adam. Brother, you are to lead in your home, and **you lead by being the first to die to your own desires, not simply so that your wife's desires might therefore lead but so that God's desires would.**

- Jonathan Leeman is the author of *Using Authority Well: A Concise Guide for Men*. <https://www.crossway.org>

# How to Stop Complaining

**O**ne of the recurring themes of the Bible is the tendency of the human heart to complain, either to others or to God. One is unacceptable; the other can be helpful. Let's explore the nature of complaining - when it is acceptable and when it is not.

## THE DESCRIPTIONS OF COMPLAINING

Complaining is defined as "the expression of a grievance or displeasure, usually against the actions and attitudes of others, including God Himself."<sup>[1]</sup> Complaint appears too often in the Bible to document it all here. Some more notable instances would include Moses complaining to the Lord about the plight of the Israelites under Pharaoh (Exodus 5:22-23), then later about the burden of leading the people in the wilderness. We find instances of the Israelites complaining against Moses and Aaron (and God) in the wilderness when they doubted or disliked God's provision for them (Exodus 5:21; 14:11-12; 15:23-24; 16:2-3; 17:2-3; Numbers 11:1-10, 33; 14; 16:41; 20:2-5; 21:5-6; Deuteronomy 1:27-28; Psalm 106:24-26). Jeremiah complained to the Lord about his miserable calling and the treatment he received from the people (Jeremiah 15:10; 20:14-18; Lamentations 3). Martha complained about her sister Mary's failure to help in the kitchen (Luke 10:14). False

teachers are called "grumblers" and "malcontents" (Jude 16).

Yet, the New Testament is clear: *"Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world"* (Philippians 2:14-15). James 5:9 commands, *"Do not grumble against one another."*

## THE SOURCE OF COMPLAINING

■ **Disappointment** - A disappointed heart frequently manifests in a complaining tongue. Disappointment has several facets:

- With God, because He did not perform according to our often-flawed understanding of His ways.

- With others, because they did not meet the expectations we established for them in serving our needs.

- With circumstances, because a situation has not fulfilled some self-determined desire for our life.

- With ourselves, because we did not measure up to some subjective standard we had established.

■ **Comparison** - Not all comparison is bad. Sometimes we can see the difficulty of another and feel humbled because our life is blessed by undeserved grace. Too often, pride drives compari-

son. When others seem lesser in some way we can gloat in our superiority. When we compare unfavourably, we can wallow in self-pity. Our ailing and self-centered heart eventually manifests in complaint.

■ **Ingratitude** - When we doubt or disregard the goodness, faithfulness, and provision of God, our hearts become ungrateful. Flowing from the reality of that heart condition, complaint eventually surfaces. Discontent, dissatisfaction, and a disagreeable outlook are inevitable.

## THE RESULTS OF COMPLAINING

■ **Others are infected** - Complaining can beget more complaining. It can be a communicable spiritual disease. It slowly drains the peace and gratitude from a situation or relationship.

■ **Testimony is damaged** - A complaining lifestyle is the evidence of attitudes and ambitions that are not under the control of the Holy Spirit. Few things can damage a godly testimony before one's family, friends, work associates, and unsaved acquaintances more effectively than complaining.

■ **Others are repulsed** - As a result, a complainer can soon become isolated from others who are trying to maintain a wholesome outlook on life. No one who is seeking to cultivate joy, gratitude, and positive progress in life



enjoys being around a complainer.

## THE ANTIDOTE FOR COMPLAINING

■ **Turn to the Lord** - Let's be honest. We are all bombarded with challenging circumstances. Disappointments can undermine our joy. Comparison can leave us feeling defeated. Ingratitude can rise up in any heart. But the answer is not to "spew" against others or onto innocent bystanders. We must turn to God in honest confession of our feelings and surrender our troubled heart. Only He can give us a transformational attitude adjustment.

*Continued on p. 10*

# How to Stop Complaining

*Continued from p. 9*

■ **Take it to the Lord** - When we unmask our complaints before God we are less prone to unload our complaints on others. Many of the biblical figures poured out the negative content of their hearts to God. The Lord already knows the complaints of your heart and only He can help you sort them out. In Psalms 3, 6, 12, 13, 22, 44, 57, 60, 74, 79, 80, 85, 88, 90, and 139 we find instances of "lament" as the writers expressed despair, anger, protest, or doubt in response to difficult situations. D.A. Carson has noted, "There is no attempt in Scripture to whitewash the anguish of God's people when they undergo suffering. They argue with God, they complain to God, they weep before God.

Theirs is not a faith that leads to dry-eyed stoicism, but to a faith so robust it wrestles with God." So, we must also "wrestle with God" in our prayers, our Bible reading, our journalling, and our weeping. This is the proper venting and vetting of our complaints.

■ **Trust in the Lord** - As happens in almost all of the Psalms of lament, the writer's solution is to embrace fresh trust in the Lord. We, too, must renew our mind, will, and emotions in the truths of God's goodness, providence, power, grace, mercy, compassion, lovingkindness, and faithfulness. We can trust the truth of Who He is with all our hearts and not lean on our own understanding (Proverbs 3:5-6). This must be a daily and

even moment-by-moment resolve.

## FROM COMPLAINT TO CONQUEST

One of the most notable and raw biblical examples of turning complaint into trust is found in Lamentations 3. I strongly encourage you to read it. The prophet is unhinged in expressing his complaints and consternation before God. As a result, he admits, "My soul is bowed down within me" (v. 20). Then, after surrendering his gut-wrenching complaint, he chooses to trust the Lord (vv. 21-26): "But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; His mercies never come to an end; they are new

every morning; great is Your faithfulness. 'The Lord is my portion,' says my soul, 'therefore I will hope in Him.' The Lord is good to those who wait for Him, to the soul who seeks Him. It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord."

If you struggle today with a complaining spirit, make this your daily resolve to stop it. Complaining will subside. Hope will abound. Joy will return. Relationships will improve. Christ will be honoured.

- Daniel Henderson.

[1] Manser, M. H. (2009). Dictionary of Bible Themes: The Accessible and Comprehensive Tool for Topical Studies. London: Martin Manser.

## Sout vs Smaak

In die vensterbank bo my stoof staan 'n houtboksie wat my pa in die houtwerkklas op skool gemaak het. Binne-in is growwe sout. My ma het my geleer om met growwe sout te kook. Hierdie is een van my kosbaarste besittings - elke dag dink ek aan my ouers wanneer ek dit gebruik. Dit is nie eers regtig mooi nie, maar in daai boksie is 'n deel van my storie.

As jy deesdae op sosiale media rondblaai, sal jy dink sout is 'n geloofsbelydenis. Himalaja-sout of doodgewoon pienk sout is goed vir jou; nee, sê die puris, Keltiese sout - dit is die een wat jy moet gebruik. "Moet net nie tafelsout gebruik nie - dit is gif!" Almal het 'n sterk opinie, en almal is oortuig hulle sout is die regte een.

Maar haal sout heeltemal uit, en skielik maak dit nie saak watter tipe jy verkies nie - alles smaak net laf. Selfs die mooiste gereg. Selfs die soetste koek. Alles kry sout in. Dis snaaks hoe iets so klein so 'n reuseverskil maak. 'n Knippie - dis al.

En Jesus sê in Matteus 5:13: "Julle is die sout vir die aarde." Nie die hele sak nie. Nie oorweldigend nie. Nie om mense toe te gooi en te oorlaai nie - net genoeg om smaak te bring. Ons dink partykeer ons moet groot dinge doen, luid wees, sigbaar wees, indrukwekkend wees. Maar sout werk stil. Jy sien dit skaars. Jy hoor dit nie, maar jy proe die verskil. Dis daardie klein bietjie vriendelikheid wanneer almal haastig is; daardie sagte woord wanneer iemand dit die minste



verwag; daardie oomblik van omgee wat niemand op sosiale media gaan plaas nie, maar wat iemand se dag verander.

Jy hoef nie 'n 10 kg sak sout oor iemand uit te gooi nie. Trouens, te veel sout bederf die kos. Hoe het die ou mense geleer: te veel van 'n goeie ding is nie goed nie. Maar 'n klein bietjie, presies op die regte plek, maak alles anders.

Miskien is dit hoekom God jou sit waar jy is: nie om die hele wêreld op een slag te verander nie, maar om dáár waar jy is, smaak te bring. In jou huis. By jou werk. In 'n gesprek. In 'n moeilike dag. Selfs daar waar jy nie nou wil wees nie. Gaan wees sout. Nie met 'n geraas nie, nie oorweldigend nie - net eg. Net genoeg om die lewe weer te laat proe soos dit moet. Want in 'n wêreld wat soms laf en smaakloos is, kan jou klein bietjie 'n groot verskil maak. -Ds Hettie Wessels

## Living Honourably

As the days run into each other, we can get so caught up in the busyness of our lives and responsibilities that we forget to pay attention to our values. There will always be more to do if we look at life as an endless checklist. However, all we have is this moment. Do we leave time to rest and recharge? Do we make space for loved ones and community care?

True wisdom does not rush from one obligation to the next. It knows what is most important and makes room. True wisdom realises that becoming more present in our lives means tuning into our values and making changes to live according to them. Honourable living is intentional; it does not happen by chance. May we live into this awareness, turning our attention to the Lord and to what we know is our part in the here and now.

Prayer: Wise God, there is no other God before or after You. All wisdom is from You and found in You. I look to You even as I become more aware of the gift of the present moment.

- Wrapped in Christ, Brian Simmons

### Oase van Hoop

AGS Baillie Park Gemeente



Sondagoggenddiens 9:30

JOI-Kinderdienste 9:30

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OASE VAN HOOP  
-KOFFIE KAFEE-  
HEB. 6:19  
est. 2023

