A CHANGE OF HEART

a mini devotional



NATASHA N SMITH

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Lovely You Blog

DAY 1
ME + GOD = HEART CHANGE



THE HEART IS DECEITFUL ABOVE ALL THINGS, AND DESPERATELY WICKED: WHO CAN KNOW IT?" JEREMIAH 17:9 KJV

The Message translation says "The heart is hopelessly dark and deceitful, a puzzle that no one can figure out. But I, God, search the heart and examine the mind. I get to the heart of the human. I get to the root of things. I treat them as they really are, not as they pretend to be."

No one is able to figure out the human heart but God. It's like a puzzle no one can figure out.

Did you know the world's largest puzzle is 42,000 pieces? Educa's new 42,000 piece puzzle called Around the World, measures over 24.57 x 5.15 feet. Crazy, right?

Well what if we had a 42,000 piece puzzle and a quarter to a half of the pieces were blank or missing? Would you be able to figure how to put the puzzle together? The answer is no.

I believe that is how it is with us in life. We don't have all the pieces and we are unable to figure it out. But God in His infinite knowledge can.

So it goes to say that God must become part of the equation of our life, in order for us to experience a ***Change of Heart***.

Me + God = A Change of Heart

A change of heart, being the changing of your inner self... exchanging your old way of thinking in exchange for seeking God's purpose for your life.

You may be saying, I don't know why I do the things I do. I don't want to do them but it's as if I can't help it. I really do want to change but I don't know how.

It's the inner struggle that we find in the book of Romans when we read about Paul.

Romans 7:15 says, "I don't really understand myself, for I want to do what is right, but I don't do it. Instead, I do what I hate."

And this struggle may not relate to your life as a whole, but it could be a specific area...like the areas of health, fitness, relationships, or finances.

Because we've somehow tricked ourselves in believing that we can change our own life when and however we please. With our change your life in these 5 easy steps.

The truth is, for lasting change to occur in our life in any area, we need God and the Spirit of God to help us.

Me + God = Heart Change

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ME + GOD
=
A CHANGE OF HEART

DAY 2 GOD'S GOODNESS

"OR DO YOU DESPISE THE RICHES OF HIS GOODNESS, FORBEARANCE, AND LONGSUFFERING, NOT KNOWING THAT THE GOODNESS OF GOD LEADS YOU TO REPENTANCE?" ROMANS 2:4 KJV

God is always up to something good. His nature is loving and kind towards us. It is His goodness that leads us to a change of heart. So the next few days will discuss 3 things that lead us to a heart change.

Romans 2:4 in the Amplified translation says, "Or do you have no regard for the wealth of His kindness and tolerance and patience [in withholding His wrath]? Are you [actually] unaware or ignorant [of the fact] that God's kindness leads you to repentance [that is, to change your inner self, your old way of thinking--seek His purpose for your life]?"

So the first thing is God's Goodness which leads us to a heart change.

In looking at God's goodness, we must first realize that it is not possible for goodness to exist outside of Jesus Christ. Because God created goodness.

Genesis 1:31 says, "And God saw everything He had made, and behold, it was very good."

James 1:17 says, "Every good and perfect gift comes from above."

As humans, we are not born good. But through Jesus in us, we can produce good things.



Goodness is one of part of the fruit of the Spirit from Galatians 5:22.

Psalm 34:8 says, "taste and see that the Lord is good.

I love this quote from Mac Canoza, which says, "We can make good works, We can be called good folks, We can do good, but we cannot be good."

You see only God is good. So, it's God's goodness that leads us to heart change.

And as we know that God must be part of the equation in order to experience a heart change.

Me + God = Heart Change.

Now we know one of the ways which God leads us into a heart change is with His goodness.

Further reading:
Acts 9 - Story of Saul

God leads Saul into a change of heart, as signified by his conversion from Saul to Paul.

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"WE CAN MAKE GOOD WORKS, WE CAN BE CALLED GOOD FOLKS WE CAN DO GOOD, BUT WE CANNOT BE GOOD."
-MAC CANOZA

DAY 3
GOD'S FORBEARANCE

"OR DO YOU DESPISE THE RICHES OF HIS GOODNESS, FORBEARANCE, AND LONGSUFFERING, NOT KNOWING THAT THE GOODNESS OF GOD LEADS YOU TO REPENTANCE?" ROMANS 2:4 KJV



Max Lucado says, "You change your life by changing your heart."

Today, let's continue on with another way in which God leads us to heart change, as found in the Romans 2:4.

Day 2, I mentioned God's goodness. Today, it's God's forbearance toward us.

According to Webster, forbearance means patient self-control; restraint and tolerance.

So in terms of God's forbearance, what does it mean?

Biblically speaking it means to allow the existence, occurrence, or practice of (something that one does not necessarily like or agree with or without interference.

God shows forbearance in that He holds back the judgement the world deserves and even what we deserve.

In fact, God gives us many opportunities to repent (or to change our heart).

Again a heart change being the changing of our inner self... exchanging our ways of thinking with seeking God's will for our life.

Many stories in the Old Testament give example after example of how God was tolerant of the actions of the Children of Israel.

We could say that Israel had a yo-yo obedience to God. We see that Israel sins, then repents, God forgives them and this cycle repeats.

The question is, how many times did God not give Israel what they deserved? The answer is, many many times.

Now, can you think of times where God has done this for you? I know I can. May we be thankful for His forbearance.

Further Reading:
Nehemiah 9-30-31
Romans 3:25
Acts 17:30

You will find examples where God's forbearance produced heart change and tremendous growth in character. God does the same in you and I.



"YOU CHANGE YOUR LIFE BY CHANGING YOUR HEART."
-MAX LUCADO

DAY 4
GOD'S LONG-SUFFERING

"OR DO YOU DESPISE THE RICHES OF HIS GOODNESS, FORBEARANCE, AND LONGSUFFERING, NOT KNOWING THAT THE GOODNESS OF GOD LEADS YOU TO REPENTANCE?" ROMANS 2:4 KJV

The Greek word for long-suffering is makrothumia. Dake's Annotated Reference Bible says that long-suffering means the leniency and patience of God whereby God's mercy and goodness are extended to men to bring them to eternal reconciliation to Himself.

Long-suffering is 1 of the 9 fruit of the Spirit. And 1 Corinthians 13:4 says, "Love suffers long."

So, it's safe to conclude, since God is love, we can also say that God suffers long. God is long-suffering.

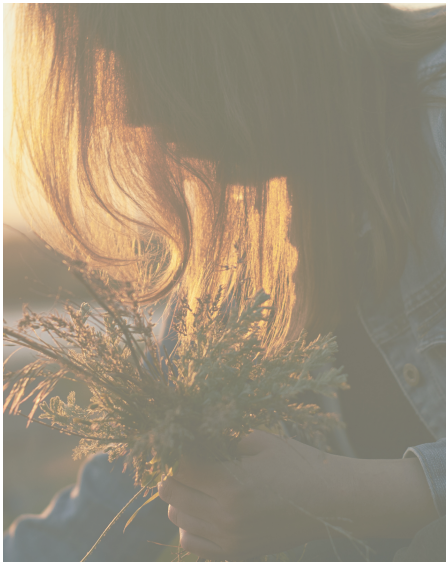
D.L Moody says that long-suffering is love enduring.

So you may ask, what's the difference between patience and long-suffering?

Long-suffering is long, patient endurance of insult, abuse, or mistreatment; while patience is the quality of being patient.

Psalm 103:8 NKJV says, "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in mercy."

We find an example of long-suffering in 1 Peter 3:20 KJV. It says, "Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water."



What's the purpose of God's longsuffering?

2 Peter 3:9 KJV says "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

2 Peter 3:15 KJV says, "And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you."

God's longsuffering leads us to repentance, a change of heart.

Further Reading:
Luke 15:20 - Story of the Prodigal

God patiently waits for us. And He celebrates when we come to Him.

Because Me + God = Change of Heart

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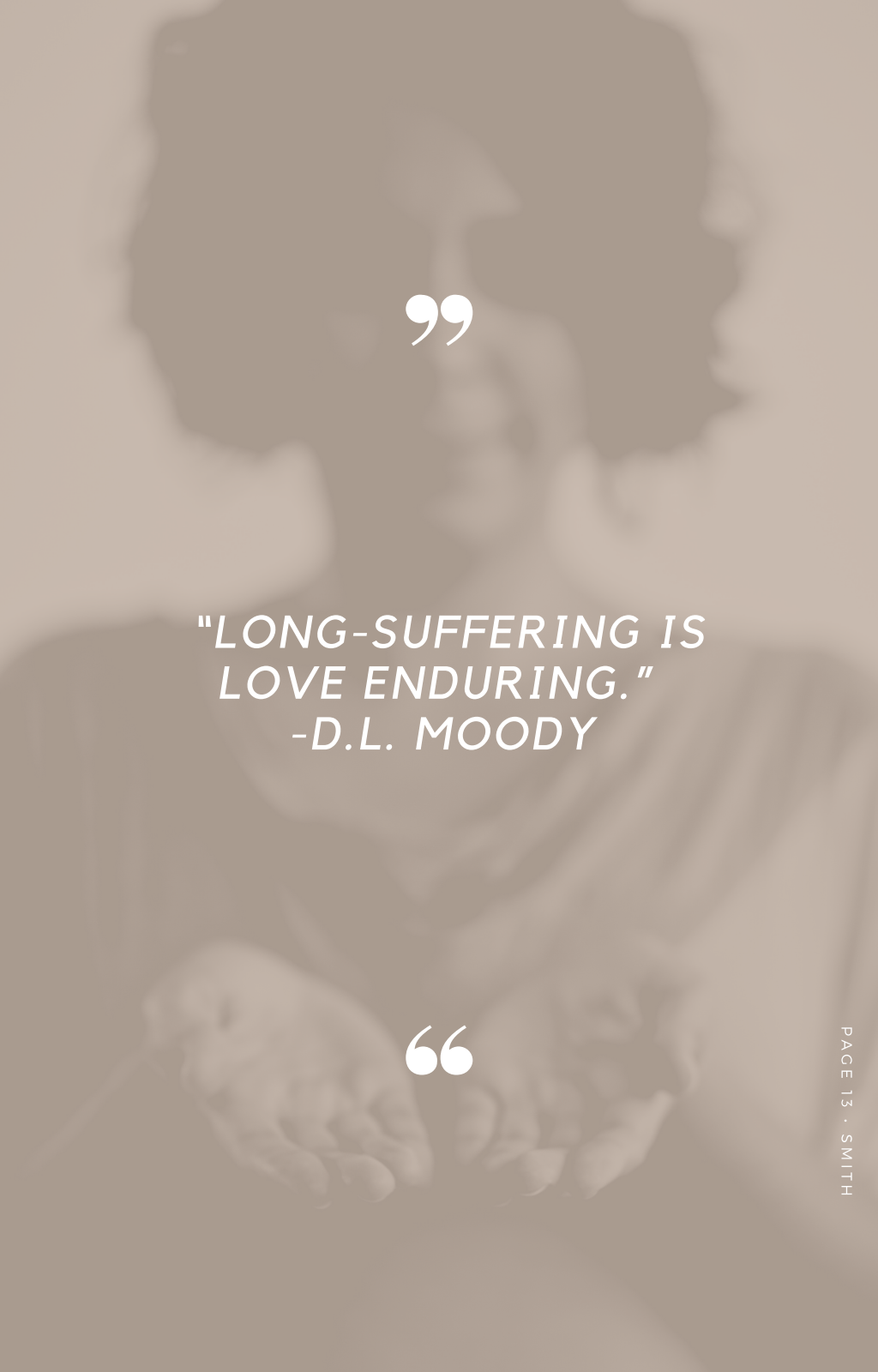

"LONG-SUFFERING IS LOVE ENDURING."
-D.L. MOODY

DAY 5
REFLECTION + PRAYER



REFLECTION

What is one area of your life in which you desire change?

What next step can you take to move toward that change?

PRAYER

Lord, thank you for being such a loving and caring God. Thank you for your goodness, your forbearance and your long-suffering that leads me to a change of heart. Thank you for Holy Spirit who leads and guides me into all truth. And thank you for your Word which brings life to me, mentally, spiritually, and physically.

Lord, I thank you for showing me what areas I need to change and Lord I trust you to help me in making the needed changes. Because I know I can only make lasting change with your help.

So Lord, I thank you for being my strength. In Jesus name, amen.

Journal Time

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Natasha Smith

Natasha is a writer, speaker, and podcaster, sharing stories on faith, family, and grief. Her mission is to inspire others to do life better through intentional faith in Jesus.

You can find her work on Lovely You Blog as well as publications such as Her View From Home, TODAY Parents, Focus on the Family, Beyond Women and Dear Sister's Magazine.

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