

Introduction to the Book

Living life can be arduous and difficult. Well, at least we can say it is difficult to understand, especially when the goals or dreams or promises of God are no nearer now than they were years ago. Having one's dreams out of arm's reach is like being in the middle of a project or a book. There is something about the middle, the "in between" that sucks the motivation out of life. How many projects or books have been stopped half-way? How many lives stop half-way?

Life is that middle ground, that place where we live "in between" promise and fulfillment, since fulfillment rarely comes immediately, especially when it deals with God. How we live this life is the essence of our faith. Is our faith in the promise or the fulfillment? Or is our faith in the One who gives the promise? The in between of life answers the question for us and purifies our faith making us ever closer to the One who created us. It may not be a pleasant process, but it is a rewarding and life changing one that miraculously engages the heart to live life to the fullest in the power of the One who made us in His Image.

All Christians live a life in between promise and fulfillment. We live in the present with our eyes fixed on the future perfect Kingdom of God. Our hope in this book is to journey with you in this land of in between as we share our stories, hoping to better grasp this life of faith and trust as we make our way through it. We do not come as experts in this enterprise but as fellow sojourners, humbled, convicted and broken by the mystery of life and the love of a God who has been quick to forgive, steadfast in His presence and promise, and slightly slow in his deliverance as He seems to plod along at "three miles an hour." We are not saying God does not arrive or that His promises are null and void. What God promises will come to pass. We are acknowledging the reality you have already encountered many times -- that God's promises do come, but generally not in the timeframe you were hoping for.

Life is too short to spend it hiding, afraid, complaining, angry, etc. God is beyond our understanding and trying to figure Him out is futile. It does little for our faith but allow us to reduce God to a manageable deity that can better be controlled. No matter how many explanations we have, they do little to convince the mind or resolve the issue(s) of life, delay of promise, pain and suffering.

Life is best lived and best done on God's terms, living out participating in His Story centered in Jesus, the "yes" and "amen" of God. God has a

promise for us all, and He longs to see it fulfilled in us; perhaps moving at "three miles an hour," moving nonetheless with a plan and purpose to make our lives something more than we can imagine. We pray you taste that in the in between of life, and may we all one day feast together in the ultimate fulfillment of life with God and each other, where promise will no longer be needed and fulfillment will be a present, eternal, reality.

May the words of this book bring you hope and help foster a closer relationship with the God of the universe, the fulfillment of all our promises. May you find His love more delightful and His process more pleasant as you enjoy Him as the fulfillment of life in between. He is the key after all -- the fulfillment of all our promises, "The one that will give you all you need from day to day if you live for Him and make the Kingdom of God your primary concern" (Matthew 6:33 NLT).

May you find all you need.

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