

Trusting God in tough circumstances

We take great comfort from the life of David. Here is a young man with great promises given to him and a great task thrust upon him. In our heads, when Jesus speaks and calls you into a situation then His favour will rest on you and things will go well. Yet we see that for David, the rocky journey began the moment the promises were given. Great success in man's eyes leads directly to great pain and turmoil and even more dangerously it lead to complacency and distraction from the One in whom all His comfort comes.

Psalm 3 says,

"Lord, I have so many enemies, so many who are against me. Listen to how they whisper their slander against me, saying, "Look! He is hopeless! Even God cannot save him from this!"

Psalm 4:

God, you're my Righteousness, my Champion Defender. Why aren't you answering me when I cry for help?

Psalm 13:

I'm hurting Lord- will you forget me forever? How much longer, Lord? Will you look the other way when I'm in need? How much longer must I cling to this constant grief?

David hurt. He was confused and felt lost? How do all of these circumstances fit with your plan, God? I do not get this? We know, because Jesus made it quite clear, that this kingdom life would not be one of earthly blessing and abundance. It is not a time to collect the comforts of the world. There will be suffering and troubles and persecution but not like this? Surely? David faced betrayal from those he served and loved and now he is hiding in caves and fleeing his own home. He was bewildered! Betrayal is the most painful hurt of all. It leaves you with so many unanswered questions, wondering why you bother. What was it all for?

And yet I do the same thing to Jesus. Not just one time but day after day. Singing his praises in one breath and planning my sin in another. I, like Peter and Judas and David, before me have betrayed the one who has poured out everything for me.

Trusting in Jesus in times of betrayal and hurt and confusion is the greatest humility and we do not do well. It is always about humility. "Go lower still" He says. "Lie down." "Become a mat for them." "Let me defend you." We look at the circumstances and assume that we know exactly what is best for this situation and us. But Jesus does not seem to be doing that. What are you doing Jesus?

He is always drawing us to Him.

Listen again to David,

Psalm 3:

...but in the depths of my heart I truly know that you have become my shield; you take me and surround me with yourself. your glory covers me continually...from your holy presence you send me a Father's help...I wont be afraid. I simply cry out, Come and save me! And you will slap them in the face...

Psalm 4:

Bring your gifts just as you are and put your trust in Him. Let the light of your radiant face shine down upon us! The intense pleasure you give me surpasses the gladness of harvest time...now I can lay down in peace...

Psalm 13:

Breathe your life into my spirit. I will yet celebrate with passion and joy when your salvation lifts me up. I will sing my song of joy to you for in all this you have strengthened my soul.

This newsletter has been a little slow in coming and in fact it has been at the point of sending once before only for things to change and require a thoughtful rewrite.

Over the last four months the very warm carpet under our feet has been very sharply tugged out from under us leaving us on our knees in the dust. Monai has been in a time of wonderful encounter with Jesus' presence for some months. Day after day as we met together He came to us and transformed hearts, teaching us how to seek Him. We were in that place when a small group in the church decided to uproot everything and all of a sudden we were not even sure we would be at Monai again! Dealing with the relational aspect of church is painful because these are people that we love, even if their behavior is hurtful. We lost a few key members and feel a bit like one of our tyres is flat.

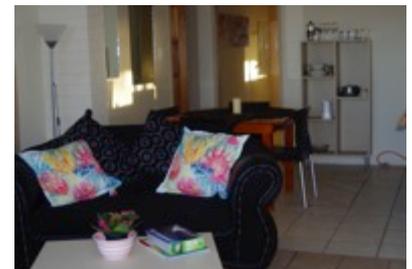
Immediately after that we had trouble at home when we uncovered some behavior in our three foster sons that meant they all left the house in the space of 24 hours. Bewilderment is probably the best word to describe how we have felt. The enemy has been busy trying to steal our peace away, for peace is not a feeling that comes from quietness around us but is a state of heart that comes from resting in Jesus. The more we dwell on the circumstances, the whys and what ifs, the less we dwell on Him and our peace evaporates.

So he continues to push us. Do you trust me? Do you trust that I am at work in the church? Do you trust that I am transforming the boys? Do you trust that I can work all this for good? In the end, the answer is always, YES even if it takes a little while to get there.



Our beautiful girls are growing rapidly and are a wonderful delight and we thank Jesus that we get to do every moment with them. Joy began crawling a number of weeks ago and can now travel at speed and has recently begun standing unaided. Abigail will turn 5 in a couple of weeks and is looking forward to a superhero party! She is most definitely a wonder woman!

We converted one of our flats into a guesthouse and received our first visitors in August. We have enjoyed welcoming all sorts of visitors to our farm. It is truly a family venture as we all muck in to get the place clean and greet the guests. Take a look at Chara Farm Stay!



This week the whole family took part in a farmers market where we sold lots of delicious treats from Laura's cookbook and homemade butter. We discovered that a Cream Tea is not universally understood!

Mohau has been in trouble with the authorities and is currently back at home on bail. Please pray that the outcome would be what is best for him.



We have had quite a bit of sickness in the last month or so with coughs and colds and this week Phoebe suffered two perforated eardrums. Thankfully, although she does not like to admit it, she is now on the mend and her hearing is returning when she wants it to! So please pray for a healthy family.

We continue to reach out to the street kids, though they have become quite dispersed in recent weeks and we see them less frequently. Last week we had five of them in prison at one time, which was a new record. Please pray for their hearts to cry out to Jesus in the midst of their struggles and for protection from gang leaders while in prison.

Thank you so much for your love and support and please do not stop interceding on our behalf.

Much Love,

Jeremy, Laura, Phoebe, Abigail & Joy.