

The Middle

Psalms 118:8 - "It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in man." (NIV) The verse is in the exact middle of the Bible.

Are you in the middle of something right now? Might want to stop and read this, because it could change the rest of your life.

As we write these words, we are in the middle of the year, about the middle of the month of July. It's been a long time since the cold of January, and will be a while till we feel it again.

Isn't it funny, if we live in a place with seasons, how we are ready for the next one after we have lived through a part of the one we are in. Realizing where we are, and spotting the middle of faith experience, right in the center, is a blessing which God is ready to give us all.

Perhaps you are in the middle of a crisis. Strange how crises usually have beginnings, middles, and ends. God offers you a moment of perspective, even healing, a way forward which will bless you and others.

Part of that progress, and the joy that comes with it, begins with trust. Trust that God can do anything. Trust that God will make every morning new. Trust that God has unlimited resources at his fingertips. Trust that God will always, always keep his promises.

"Darkness comes," writes John Piper. "In the middle of it, the future looks blank. The temptation to quit is huge. Don't. You are in good company... You will argue with yourself that there is no way forward. But with God, nothing is impossible. He has more ropes and ladders and tunnels out of pits than you can conceive. Wait. Pray without ceasing. Hope."

God not only provides a way forward from the middle of crisis, sin, and death, he is the way. "Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the father but by me."

Accepting a way forward is a step of faith. Realizing there are times we cannot possibly do this ourselves, we trust in God who is the way.

But there are things to do in the meantime, in between the various middles of things. God has much for us to do.

Mike, from the TV show, the Middle, says this about that. "We're all gonna die, and we're all gonna have a gravestone with a dash on it...and that dash represents your life. And the thing I know for sure is cause of my family, is that dash will have meant something."

So if we all get busy doing something good, and the best things are done for God and others, we will find a way out of the middle of purposelessness. As we trust God, and as we do for others, we find that we are no longer in the middle in a bad way, we are in the middle of something good.

Whether as an individual, in a church, business, or family, we can discover the advantages of the middle, and partner with God in showing the blessings which happen when we make this shift toward him. Try it. It may well change your life complexly.

We are never too young or too old to discover the blessings of the middle. There is a certain amount of faith which comes with living for a few decades, until we reach middle age, whatever that might be. It's getting further on up on numbers as the population lives longer. What is middle age now? 65? 70?

Benenet Cerf said, "Middle age is when your old classmates are so grey and wrinkled and bald they don't recognize you."

Eleanor Roosevelt said, "Probably the happiest period in life most frequently is in middle age, when the eager passions of youth are cooled, and the infirmities of age not yet begun; as we see that the shadows, which are at morning and evening so large, almost entirely disappear at midday."

Paul of Tarsus was just getting started good in ministry when he reflected on the middle, rather to stay or go to heaven. "For me," he says, "to live is Christ and to die is gain. 22 If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! 23 I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far;24 but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body.

So, let that middle change to a blessing, dear reader. You never know when the moment will come!

"If you're in the middle of the ocean with no flippers and no life preserver and you hear a helicopter, this is music. You have to adjust to your needs at the moment."~ Tom Waits