

When Life Contradicts - When "If" Doesn't Equal "Then" - When the Mountain Doesn't Move

I. "This isn't the way home."

Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it. –
Proverbs 22:6

Put Your Trust in the Ultimate Promise: I Will Never Leave You or Forsake You!

II. Promises and Principles

III. Holding God's Promises in the Waiting

"Truly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown into the sea' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him. Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours." – Mark 11:23-24

1. Don't absolutize a principle.

"I am the LORD, I do not change." – Malachi 3:6

"All his precepts are sure. They stand fast forever and ever." – Psalm 111:7-8

"Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away." – Matthew 24:35

"I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." – John 14:6

2. Don't connect dots that are not connected.

"As he passed by, he saw a man born blind from birth. And his disciples asked him, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?' Jesus

answered, “It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him.” – John 9:1-3

3. Do examine yourself, but not to the point of paralysis by analysis!

“And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.” – Mark 11:25

4. Do due diligence with the promises of Scripture.

“For I know the plans I have for you, to give you hope and a future.” – Jeremiah 29:11

⁷But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare. ⁸For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Do not let your prophets and your diviners who are among you deceive you, and do not listen to the dreams that they dream, ⁹for it is a lie that they are prophesying to you in my name; I did not send them, declares the Lord.

¹⁰“For thus says the Lord: When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place. ¹¹For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.” – Jeremiah 29:7-11

5. Do Keep Praying the Promises!

“In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor respected man. And there was a widow in that city *who kept coming* to him and saying, ‘Give me justice against my adversary.’” – Luke 18:2-3

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.” - Proverbs 3:5

IV. To Those Whose Mountain is Not Yet Moving

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“I thought I could describe a state; make a map of sorrow. Sorrow, however, turns out to be not a state but a process.”

“Knock and it shall be opened.’ But does knocking mean hammering and kicking the door like a maniac?”

“My idea of God is not a divine idea. It has to be shattered time after time. He shatters it Himself.”¹

“Shave you head if you need to. Tear your robe if you must. Fall down on your face if you have to and we will fall down with you. We will lay in the ashes and weep and sob like beasts. But then...

We will arise. And we will worship. We will lift our faces. We will look to the Lord. And we will move mountains. For the glory of God and the good of all people, this is the Word of the Lord.”²

¹ CS Lewis, A Grief Observed

² Joe Carter