

THE ONLY GOOD THING WORTH STRIVING FOR

A GOOD FRIDAY DEVOTION FOR MOMS



WE STRIVE SO HARD TO BE "GOOD MOMS". WE WORK HARD, EARN MONEY, FEED KIDS, DO LAUNDRY, ATTEND MEETINGS, SIGN OUR KIDS UP FOR SPORTS AND BAND CAMPS, JUGGLE SCHEDULES, AND TRY OH-SO-HARD TO GET PERMISSION SLIPS BACK TO SCHOOL ON TIME. AND THAT'S JUST MONDAY! THERE ARE SO MANY "GOOD MOM" LINE ITEMS. WE STRIVE TO REACH HER...WHOEVER SHE IS. BECAUSE NOT ONLY DOES SHE SERVE HER FAMILY WELL, BUT SHE ALSO RUNS MARATHONS, WEARS STYLISH CLOTHES, ROCKS HER AVIATOR GLASSES AND STACKED BOB LIKE A SUPERMODEL, IS PRESIDENT OF PTA, AND ORGANIZES THREE FUNDRAISERS A YEAR. SHE'S EDUCATED WITH A COMFORTABLE INCOME, AND HER HOME PUTS MAGNOLIA FARMS TO SHAME. AND IT'S ALWAYS CLEAN.

NONE OF THESE THINGS ARE BAD, OF COURSE. YET, MANY OF US, TO DIFFERENT DEGREES, STRIVE TO REACH HER. IT'S EXHAUSTING. MAYBE YOU'RE NOT STRIVING TO HAVE THAT PERFECT HOME OR LOOK, BUT I BET YOU STILL FIND YOURSELF STRIVING. THE DEFINITION OF "STRIVE" IS TO "MAKE GREAT EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE OR OBTAIN SOMETHING". SOME SYNONYMS ARE "DO ONE'S BEST, ALL ONE CAN, ONE'S UTMOST". SOUND LIKE YOU? OR AT LEAST WHAT THE CULTURE SAYS YOU SHOULD BE? "DOING ALL WE CAN". REACHING FOR IT. ACHIEVING IT AND HELPING MY FAMILY ACHIEVE IT. BEING EVERYTHING. EARNING WHAT WE'VE BEEN STRIVING FOR. PAYOFF AND SATISFACTION, KNOWING WE GOT THERE.

BUT WHAT MOST NEVER REALIZE IS THAT THE EARTHLY STRIVING WILL NEVER END. THERE'S NEVER A MOMENT OF "I'VE ARRIVED". IF WE'RE HONEST, THE FEELING OF COMPLETE SATISFACTION IS ALWAYS JUST AROUND THE NEXT CORNER. SO WE KEEP STRIVING, HOPING ITS DIFFERENT THIS TIME. THERE IS NOTHING THIS WORLD PROMISES THAT'S WORTH THAT. NOT EVEN SUCCESS? ACHIEVEMENT? GETTING THE KIDS INTO THE BEST SCHOOLS? NOPE. NOTHING THAT IS WORTH THE UPKEEP OF IMAGE, ENDLESS WORK, STRAINED RELATIONSHIPS, AND FAKE SMILES PLASTERED OVER BROKENNESS. NOTHING WORTH THE STRESS, LOSS OF SLEEP, AND LOSS OF WHAT'S TRULY IMPORTANT. MAYBE YOU'RE THE KIND OF MOM WHO HAS ALL THESE LINE ITEMS CHECKED OFF, OR MAYBE YOU'RE JUST TIRED OF STRIVING FOR WHAT THIS WORLD OFFERS, BUT I PROMISE YOU... THEY ALWAYS FALL SHORT. BUT I DO KNOW OF A SINGLE GOOD THING THAT IS WORTH STRIVING FOR.

GOOD FRIDAY IS COMING. IT'S THE DAY WE REMEMBER JESUS' SUFFERING AND DEATH ON A CROSS. IT'S A SAD DAY FOR TWO REASONS: (1) JESUS WAS GOD'S SON AND HE LIVED A PERFECT LIFE WITHOUT SINNING, YET HE WAS CONVICTED AS A CRIMINAL AND DIED A GRUESOME DEATH. AND (2) JESUS DIDN'T JUST DIE AN INNOCENT MAN, BUT ON BEHALF OF PEOPLE LIKE US WHO ARE GUILTY. HE TOOK THE PUNISHMENT WE SHOULD HAVE HAD AND PAID THE DEBT WE OWED. I KNOW THE STORY, BUT WHAT DOES THAT HAVE TO DO WITH STRIVING?

WELL, AS MANY "GOOD MOM" ACHIEVEMENTS AS YOU'VE UNLOCKED, YOU OWE A DEBT. IN FACT, IT'S SO HUGE THAT NO COMFORTABLE INCOME OR FUNDRAISERS YOU ORGANIZE CAN PAY IT. IT'S SO SET-IN-STONE THAT NO PTA MEETINGS OR SCHOOL PETITIONS CAN NEGOTIATE IT. IT'S SO HEAVY THAT YOUR PHILANTHROPY WON'T BALANCE IT OUT. AND IT'S INEVITABLE SO YOU CAN'T GET OUT OF IT BY LOOKING THE RIGHT PART OR HAVING CONNECTIONS. THAT DEBT IS YOUR SIN.

SEE, GOD IS HOLY (WHICH MEANS "SET APART"). EVERYTHING HE DOES AND IS IS GOOD...PERFECT. AND JESUS IS GOD IN THE FORM OF A MAN, SO HE WAS PERFECT, TOO. BUT WE ARE NOT. WE'RE FULL OF ENVY, GREED, LUST, PRIDE, UNJUST

ANGER, BITTERNESS, AND THAT'S JUST INSIDE! COMPOUND THAT WITH FOUL LANGUAGE, GOSSIP, IMPATIENCE, LIES, SUBSTANCE ABUSE, SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND MORE. THAT'S WHY GOD MUST BE "SET APART" FROM US.

YET, GOD CREATED US AND LOVES US. HE WANTS US TO BE WITH HIM, BUT OUR SIN KEEPS US SEPARATE. ROMANS 6:23 SAYS THAT "THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH". SO NOT ONLY MUST WE BE APART, BUT THAT DEBT? IT HAS ONE PAYMENT: DEATH, BOTH HERE AND ETERNITY IN HELL. AND WE DESERVE IT!

BUT BECAUSE GOD LOVES US, HE DECIDED TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM WE COULDN'T SOLVE OURSELVES. GOD SENT HIS SON JESUS TO DIE FOR US. SEE, BECAUSE JESUS LIVED A SINLESS LIFE, HE WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO COULD PAY THE DEBT WE OWED FOR OUR SIN! JESUS DID IT WILLINGLY, OUT OF LOVE FOR US. HE KNEW US BEFORE WE WERE BORN, WATCHED US GROW FROM GIRLS INTO WOMEN, AND, NOW, WATCHES SADLY AS WE STRIVE OURSELVES TO EXHAUSTION.

WHY IS OUR STRIVING SO SAD? BECAUSE IT'S NEEDLESS. SIMPLY CHOOSING TO FOLLOW HIM REQUIRES NO STRIVING ON YOUR PART. ALL THE EFFORT AND "GOOD MOM" ACHIEVEMENTS AREN'T REQUIRED BECAUSE JESUS HAS DONE ALL THE WORK HIMSELF! YOU DON'T NEED TO WORK HARD TO EARN HIS LOVE OR HEAVEN. YOU DON'T NEED TO LOOK THE PART, SAY ALL THE RIGHT WORDS, OR CLEAN UP YOUR ACT FIRST. JUST COME.

REPENT OF (TURN FROM YOUR SIN) AND PLACE YOUR FULL TRUST IN JESUS CHRIST FOR YOUR SALVATION AND HE'LL BEGIN WORKING IN YOUR HEART. OR IF YOU'VE ALREADY DONE THAT, ASK HIM TO RENEW YOUR MIND IN THIS AREA. OPEN YOUR HEART TO HIM. LEARN WHO HE IS THROUGH THE BIBLE. PRAY FOR GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT TO FILL YOU. YOUR DESIRES FOR WORLDLY ACCOMPLISHMENT WILL BEGIN TO CHANGE. THE ENDLESS LINE ITEMS YOU PURSUED WILL BEGIN TO FADE AS YOUR HEART ALIGNS TO GOD'S. THE NEED FOR THE RIGHT IMAGE, FAMILY SUCCESS, AND ALL THE REST WILL CHANGE AS YOU REALIZE: GOD DESIRES THE TENDERNESS OF HEART SO MUCH MORE THAN YOUR LIFE GOALS.

YOUR EXHAUSTION TO BE THE "GOOD MOM" WILL TURN TO PEACE. YOU KNOW WHY? BECAUSE YOU WILL HAVE EMBRACED THE MOST BEAUTIFUL MESSAGE OF GOOD FRIDAY: THAT JESUS WAS ALL THE "GOOD" YOU NEED TO BE AND THAT PURSUING HIM IS THE ONLY "GOOD THING" WORTH TRULY STRIVING FOR.

"FOR BY GRACE YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED THROUGH FAITH. AND THIS IS NOT YOUR OWN DOING; IT IS THE GIFT OF GOD, NOT A RESULT OF WORKS, SO THAT NO ONE MAY BOAST." EPHESIANS 4:29 (ESV)

PRAYER: GOD HELP ME TO PUT MY FULL TRUST IN YOU AND TO PURSUE YOU WITH ALL MY HEART. I WANT TO STOP STRIVING FOR THINGS THAT DON'T MATTER. HELP ME SEE CLEARLY THIS GOOD FRIDAY THAT YOUR SACRIFICE FOR ME HAS BROUGHT ME PEACE. AMEN.

-LEAH TATINA

FOR MORE ENCOURAGING DEVOS, BLOG POSTS,
SHOP UPDATES, AND FREE RESOURCES FROM LEAH,
PLEASE SUBSCRIBE TO THE MATCHLESS BEAUTY COMMUNITY AT
WWW.OURMATCHLESSBEAUTY.COM/SUBSCRIBE



OURMATCHLESSBEAUTY.COM