



The Encourager

Therefore encourage one another with these words.

1 Thessalonians 4:18

RELAX

According to a Greek legend, in ancient Athens a man noticed the great storyteller Aesop playing childish games with some little boys. He laughed and jeered at Aesop, asking him why he wasted his time in such frivolous activity.

Aesop responded by picking up a bow, loosening its string, and placing it on the ground. Then he said to the critical Athenian, "Now, answer the riddle, if you can. Tell us what the unstrung bows implies."

The man looked at it for several moments but had no idea what point Aesop was trying to make. Aesop explained, "If you keep a bow always bent, it will break eventually; but if you let it go slack, it will be more fit for use

when you want it."

People are also like that. That's why we all need to take time to rest. In today's Scripture, Jesus prescribed time off for His wearied disciples after they had returned from a prolonged period of ministry. And in the Old Testament, God set a pattern for us when He "rested from all His work" (Gen.2:3).

Shouldn't we take His example seriously? Start by setting aside a special time to relax physically and renew yourself emotionally and spiritually. You will be at your best for the Lord if you have taken time to loosen the bow.

Our Daily Bread, June 6, 1994.



Only today

There are two days in every week about which we shouldn't worry.

One is yesterday, with its mistakes and cares, its aches and pains. Yesterday has passed forever beyond our control.

The other day is tomorrow, with its possible adversities and blunders. Until its sun rises, we have no stake in tomorrow, for it is yet unborn.

That leaves only one day — today. Anyone can fight the battle of just one day. It is only when we add the burden of those two eternities — yesterday and tomorrow — that contentment will escape us.



Holy and awesome is his name.

PSALM 111:9



"When you pass through the waters"
Deep the waves may be and cold.
But Jehovah is our refuge.
And His promise is our hold;
For the Lord Himself has said it.
He, the faithful God and true:

"When you come to the waters You will not go down. BUT THROUGH."
Seas of sorrow, seas of trial.
Bitter anguish, fiercest pain.
Rolling surges of temptation Sweep—
ing over heart and brain—

They will never overflow us
For we know His word is true:
All His waves and all His billows
He will lead us safely THROUGH .

Threatening breakers of destruction. Doubt's insidious undertow.
Will not sink us, will not drag us
Out to ocean depths of woe:
For His promise will sustain us.
Praise the Lord, whose Word is true!
We will not go down, or under.

For He says, "You will pass THROUGH ."

Annie Johnson Flint



QUOTES

MOST OF THE IMPORTANT THINGS IN THE WORLD HAVE BEEN ACCOMPLISHED BY PEOPLE WHO HAVE KEPT ON TRYING WHEN THERE SEEMED TO BE NO HOPE AT ALL.

Dale Carnegie

If you chase two rabbits, both will escape.

Anonymous

Count your blessings. Once you realize how valuable you are and how much you have going for you, the smiles will return, the sun will break out, the music will play, and you will finally be able to move forward the life that God intended for you with grace, strength, courage, and confidence.

Og Mandino

Our greatest foes, and whom we must chiefly combat, are within.

Miguel de Cervantes

The trail is the thing, not the end of the trail. Travel too fast and you miss all you are traveling for.

Louis L'Amour



Always within reach

As I grow older, I appreciate help getting up from the couch. Often, my husband extends his arm to boost me up. This act of kindness reminds me how the Lord reaches out to me each morning. He is the strength to lift me up so I needn't depend on myself.

Looking back through the years, I can see how the Lord endlessly extended his arm to me. Isaiah 33:2 says, "O LORD, be gracious to us; we wait for you. Be our arm every morning, our salvation in the time of trouble." Too often I haven't waited for the Lord, and my impatience resulted in no-good results. Waiting for — and accepting — God's guidance isn't always easy, but he always comes through, and we're never out of his reach.

I'm so thankful my heavenly Father graciously extends his arm to help me up, get me "unstuck" and keep me from trouble.

—MaryAnn Sundby



Optimism grounded in hope

"I am fundamentally an optimist," said anti-apartheid leader Nelson Mandela. "Part of being optimistic is keeping one's head pointed toward the sun, one's feet moving forward. There were many dark moments when my faith in humanity was sorely tested, but I would not and could not give myself up to despair.."

Some say optimism is naïve, "a generic good idea about the future" (Walter Brueggemann, *Reverberations of Faith*), and distinguish it from hope. But Mandela's 27 years in prison and other sufferings would indicate that, in his case, optimism is anchored in deep hope.

Our hope is grounded in God's power to bring life from death, primarily in Jesus' resurrection, and in other acts of deliverance. God brings joy from sorrow, healing from brokenness, love from hate. We can't fathom what goodness awaits us down the road (Could Mandela, in prison, imagine becoming South Africa's first black president?!), so we keep looking up and moving forward. Such optimism is rooted in profound hope — and is a gift of God.



CAST-IRON APPLE NUTMEG COFFEE CAKE

INGREDIENTS

- 3 tablespoons butter, cubed
- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar, divided
- 2 cups chopped peeled Gala apple
- 1/4 cup brewed coffee
- 2/3 cup canola oil
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 large egg plus 1 large egg white, room temperature
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg

DIRECTIONS:

- 1/3 cup brewed coffee
 - 1/4 cup heavy whipping cream
 - 1-1/2 cups confectioners' sugar
- ### DIRECTIONS
- Preheat oven to 375°. In a 10-in. cast-iron or other ovenproof skillet, melt butter over low heat. Add apples and 1/4 cup brown sugar. Cook and stir until crisp-tender, about 5 minutes. Stir in coffee; remove from heat.
 - In a large bowl, beat oil, sugar, egg, egg white, vanilla and remaining 1/4 cup brown sugar until well blended. In another bowl, whisk flour, cinnamon, salt, baking soda and nutmeg; gradually beat into oil mixture. Gently spread over apple mixture.
 - Bake until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean, 18-22 minutes. Cool on a wire rack 10 minutes.
 - Meanwhile, for drizzle, in a small saucepan, bring coffee and cream to a boil; cook until liquid is reduced to 1/4 cup 10-12 minutes. Remove from heat; stir in confectioners' sugar. Let stand 10 minutes. Drizzle over cake.



<https://www.tasteofhome.com/recipes/cast-iron-apple-nutmeg-coffee-cake/print/>

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