



SOMEHOW

I love it when we get this far into a memorization project and I start hearing from you about how God is using these verses to speak to you, to encourage you, and to move you along in your faith. He has given us His Word and I am convinced there are blessings in store as we take the time to hide it in our hearts. Thank you for sharing the benefits God is bringing your way as you memorize. Keep sharing!

This week we move on to verse 11, a short verse that is packed with a powerful message to consider. In verse 10, Paul was emphatic about knowing Christ and he boldly stated his desire for three things:

1. He wanted to know the power of Christ's resurrection
2. He wanted to share in Christ's sufferings
3. He wanted to become like Christ in His death

In our previous devotion, we discussed the seriousness of what Paul said in verse 10. He said, "I want to know Christ." Even though that can be challenging, we encouraged each other to say it, even if it means we have to sacrifice some things. And, I am sure that is not a news flash, we will have to sacrifice if we really want to know Christ and become like Him. His whole life was a sacrifice.

As we move on to verse 11, there is a shift that I want to discuss. In verse 11, Paul says,

"and somehow to attain to the resurrection from the dead"

I don't know about you but that shift sounds very familiar to me. Let me describe it for you; maybe you will recognize it too. You see, as I consider my faith, I can get very excited at times. When I think on the things of God, when I participate in dynamic worship, when I am in the midst of strong teaching and fellowship, when I have authentic prayer times... during all these moments and experiences, my faith soars. And it is during these times that I can make some pretty bold statements. Statements that sound like verse 10,

"I want to know Christ and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in His sufferings, becoming like Him in His death."

I may not use those same words but my faith is bold as I declare in my heart and sometimes in my talking to others about all I want to do for Christ, all I want to do with Christ, all I want my faith to become. It is as if nothing is stopping me or ever could stop me. I am focused.

Ever been there? I am sure you have. I think Paul was there as he wrote verse 10. Somehow sitting in a prison cell his faith was soaring as he wrote that statement. Then... he writes verse 11. As I read verse 11, the tone shifts. It is almost as if I hear a sigh. Do you hear it? Read verse 10, then sigh and then read verse 11. Better yet, since you have memorized it, say verse 10, then sigh, and then say verse 11☺.

Let me explain. We can be excited about our faith and we can make bold statements in our heart and our mouth. At these times, our minds and hearts are looking upward, toward our great God and all that He has done and will do for us in Christ. And then... our focus shifts; we look at our lives and the reality of our situations and there comes a sigh as we say,

"And so somehow..."

When my focus is on Christ, on the power of His resurrection, knowing that power is available to me, there is no stopping my faith, no stopping what my God can do and what I will trust Him to do. But when I get my eyes on me, I sigh and my faith putters, and my statement sounds more like, "Somehow maybe God can do this. I don't have a clue how, but somehow". Let me share some things about SOMEHOW faith.

SOMEHOW faith is ok so we shouldn't be discouraged by it. When Paul writes this I think he has realized he doesn't have to have it all figured out. When he looks at Christ and then looks at himself he has no idea how God is going to move him from where he is to where he needs to be. I believe that is why he is using the word SOMEHOW. It is like he is saying, "I don't know how God will do this in me, but SOMEHOW, He will."

Really this is where true faith steps in. It is the trusting when we don't understand how in the world God is going to move and do and redeem. We don't understand, we sigh when we look at our circumstances, but we choose to look upward and say, "SOMEHOW, God is going to move in this death like situation and bring it to life!" SOMEHOW faith, it is ok, in fact it is true faith in action.

When I look at our memorizing group for this project, at this time we have over 300 people memorizing this Philippians passage. Our memorizers come from 8 countries and 18 states. We are as young as 8 and as old as 80 but I believe God is speaking a SOMEHOW faith in our hearts. We have memorizers who are

- Dealing with breast cancer
- Praying for prodigal children
- Struggling with church situations
- Spreading the Gospel in dangerous cultures
- Believing they can't memorize scripture
- Dealing with the effects of multiple sclerosis
- Battling depression
- Caring for seriously sick children
- Hurting from divorce
- Walking through grief
- Fighting secret sin

We could go on and on... We all have those moments of soaring faith and then we look at our lives and sigh and wonder, "How in the world are you going to do something with this "dead" situation God? How are you going to bring Your resurrected LIFE into this?" But even though we sigh, we know our God, that He is a God of resurrection and redemption. So we say, "SOMEHOW!" We don't know how He will, but we know SOMEHOW He will.

That is faith. I love how Paul defines faith in the book of Hebrews. In Hebrews 11:1 he says,

"Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see."

It is knowing that SOMEHOW God is going to bring about His promises in our life, even when we can't explain how He will do it. When Jesus was laid in the tomb, beaten beyond recognition and bloody from death, no one could have explained how God would resurrect Him. But... He did!

I encourage you today to embrace this SOMEHOW faith. I believe one of the best ways to do that is to memorize scripture. The verses that you hide in your heart speak to you in the deep places when your faith wants to plummet. They remind you of who God is; they speak to you of His promises and power. So... press on, SOMEHOW God is going to bring LIFE where you need a resurrection!

Believing with you,

Sharon Thomas

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