

Solution for Life



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As we write this newsletter the world is in crisis. Little did we know when we wrote the last newsletter on "Courage" that the pandemic was coming and with it a myriad of new challenges. People are suffering and dying, churches are not gathering, businesses are hurting, and freedoms we value have been limited. The confusion makes it difficult to look far past the moment. Dan wrote earlier about "Change." I remember him saying to me, "I don't know what is going to happen in the future, but I sense God is saying that great change is coming." The change is major. Our theme this time is "Divine Appointments." By divine appointments we mean situations in life that appear to be coincidental. Later, we recognize God was present and orchestrating the situation. "Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be." (Psalm 139:16) Our prayer is that you have hope. God is present.

Blessings,

Dan and Jessie Westlund

Watch and Pray | by Daniel S. Westlund

Back in January of this year, the Holy Spirit spoke to me twice that change was coming. I shared this in our last newsletter. I sought to understand if the change was for me personally, for the church, or for the nation. Now we have learned it is for all three. Change is occurring at such a rapid pace it is hard to grasp all that is happening. Nineteen years ago, in the second issue of our Solution for Life newsletter, I listed ten things that we should expect to take place based on Biblical prophecy.

1. The continued advance of technology to ensure the control of all commerce by the anti-Christ (Revelation 13:16-17).
2. The re-emergence of

3. The continued strengthening of China as a world power (Revelation 16:12).
4. Trouble and world pressure on Israel will continue to increase (Daniel 12:1).
5. Interest in spiritual and religious matters will intensify. But it will represent a form of Godliness (II Timothy 3:1-5).
6. Persecution will increase for those who believe that Jesus Christ is the only way to heaven and that we are saved by faith alone in

7. Economic activity will continue with buying and selling (Luke 17:28).
8. Sexual immorality will be more widespread (Matthew 24:27 and Genesis 5:6).
9. The Gospel will reach into all parts of the world (Matthew 24:14).
10. Those who hold firmly onto Christ will be saved (Matthew 24:13).

All ten have been or are being fulfilled at this very moment. In 2016 the Holy Spirit impressed on my heart that difficult economic time would come in 2021. Today is only the beginning. Life will go on, people will continue to buy and sell, eat and drink, marry and be

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given in marriage, like in the days of Noah and Lot, until we are caught up to be with the Lord just before God's

judgement is poured out, described in Luke 17:26-35 and Revelation 15-16. I wonder where you are when you read these passages.

Based on the Bible, we can expect a push toward a one-world government with some type of a unified economic system to bring calm to the economic chaos taking place. We will see a united religious system involving all the major

religions of the world to bring peace, however to the exclusion of those who

I am the way, and the truth and the life

believe that we are saved only by faith in Christ and that Christ is the only way to heaven. These individuals will face increased persecution, causing many to fall away. Those who place their faith in Christ alone will be hated by all nations. This will all take place on an increasing level because of the many false prophets and teachers that have and will continue to appear,

deceiving many people, saying, "We all worship the same God and there are many ways to heaven." We must be on our guard.

We must watch and pray.

Never forget what Jesus said: "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6)

To see the newsletter and more Watch and Pray information from 2001, go to the website www.solutionforlife.org. It will be under the publications tab.

Solution for growth

Daniel's Divine Appointment | by Stephen Westlund

Six hundred years before Jesus was born, a teenage boy from a noble family was taken from his home in Israel and brought into exile in a land called Babylon. Daniel was an intelligent and handsome young man, and so he was trained in the language and culture of Babylon that he might serve the king. But God had a bigger plan, a greater purpose for Daniel. Daniel's new position in the kingdom of Babylon was a divine appointment.

After Daniel had completed his Babylonian training, the king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, had dreams so intense they shook him to the core and he could not sleep. He summoned the magicians, sorcerers, and astrologers to interpret one of the dreams. To be sure the interpretation was correct, Nebuchadnezzar would not share the details of the dream. Of course, his expectation was unreasonable, and the magicians did not have the magic, the sorcerers did not have the spells, and the astrologers could not read the stars to provide the king the answers he sought.

When the king's "wise" men could not interpret the dream, he ordered all the wise men of Babylon to be executed. Young Daniel, though not given the opportunity to interpret the dream, was among the wise men and would soon be put to death. But God gave Daniel poise, wisdom, and knowledge, and

Daniel persuaded the king's officer to allow him to speak with the king. When Daniel spoke with the king, he asked for some time to interpret the dream. Daniel used the time given by the king well. He went to his friends from Israel, also among the wise men, and asked them to pray with him and ask God to have mercy and to deliver them from death.

That night God revealed the mystery of Nebuchadnezzar's dream to Daniel in a vision. The next day, Daniel interceded for the wise men of Babylon. He went to the executioner and said, "Take me to the king, and I will interpret his dream."

Daniel shared the interpretation of the dream with Nebuchadnezzar, and he fell at Daniel's feet and said, "Surely your God is the God of gods and the Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries." And Nebuchadnezzar, the most powerful king in the world, made Daniel the ruler over the entire province of Babylon and put the wise men of Babylon under Daniel's charge. Daniel then raised the friends who had sought God for mercy with him to the position of administrators within the province of Babylon.

While our own divine appointments may not be as grand as Daniel's, we learn a great deal from how Daniel responded. First, Daniel's divine

appointment was born out of hardship and was not of his own choosing. When difficult times come, it is natural to ask, "Why is this happening?" Rarely do we ask, "Lord, what is your plan and purpose in this difficulty?" When we approach God with "why?" He gives Himself to heal our pain. When we approach God with "What is your plan and purpose?" we open ourselves to His guidance, and He leads and guides us according to His perfect plan and purpose for our lives.

Second, divine appointments are not based on age or experience. Scholars agree Daniel was in his mid-teens when exiled to Babylon. And before his twentieth birthday he faced execution for the failure of others. The old saying, "God will never give you more than you can handle," simply isn't true. When God gives you a divine appointment, by His design, it will be bigger than you. The appointment will make you answer the question, "Do I really trust God with this?" I encourage you, when you find yourself in such a place, do as Daniel did. Surround yourself with Godly friends, get on your knees, trust God, and ask Him for help.

Solution for caring

Hope | by Jessie A. Westlund

As I write, I am reminded of my childhood. I was four years old when a sign was placed on our front door: "Polio Quarantined!" My mother was at the hospital with my sister, Debbie, who had polio. It was just my dad and me. I was lonely and scared. Dad was sad. I was afraid my sister would die.

The day we brought her home, the sign was off the house. At the hospital, I was so excited to see the nurse wheel my sister down the hall towards us. She taught me how to help my sister to walk. Activities at home were different. We all worked together to help Debbie be able to walk again. That season had a significant impact on my life.

Just as the polio epidemic changed our family, there are many adjustments we are continually making related to this current pandemic. The changes and losses we experience impact us emotionally, physically, and spiritually. We all have our story and our lives will all change, just as they did post-9/11. Our reactions will all be different. This experience is very personal. Some feel they can't focus, others feel sick or tired all the time. There are those who are lonely, angry, or afraid, wondering where God is. Financial pressures can be overwhelming. These are just a few emotions that normally accompany grief and the feeling of losing control. Understating

grief and loss is important when going through a crisis. Having the virus or losing someone from the virus creates deep wounds that can impact us for a long time. Grief is a natural, expected response to a loss or change in life. How do we get through the changes and work through how the epidemic is impacting and will continue to impact our lives?



For my family who lived through the polio epidemic and many more catastrophic events throughout our lives, we ask a lot of why questions. It has been a journey and some days we still recognize new ways in which that time changed our lives. God has brought many blessings out of the ashes, but it took time. The key to healing is being gentle with yourself. Through my sister's illness and the loss of my mother, I learned to trust in Jesus. My family has learned a deeper meaning to leaning into Jesus in the changes and pain.

It helps to identify a friend or person to talk to about the way we're feeling, someone who will listen and also remind us that God is with us in the pain and He will help get us through. This is very important. We'd prefer to just escape; however, working through hard things draws us to a deeper relationship with God. Ask Him for help. Ask a trusted friend to pray for you. Identify favorite songs and devotions that give you peace. Most importantly, whisper, "Jesus I trust you." "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you." (James 4:8) "The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. (Psalm 34:18) There is hope. The hope is not in trusting all will be the same after COVID-19, rather in trusting God.

You may want someone to talk to as you work through losses you are experiencing; if so, we are available to help. There is a grief and loss coach available to support you. In addition, there is printed material related to healing when experiencing loss on the website www.solutionforlife.org under the Caring section. We would like to support you. Contact us at sfl@solutionforlife.org.

**Trust in Him at all times, O people;
pour out your hearts to Him,
for God is our refuge. Psalm 62:8**

Solution for women

Life's Interruptions | by Kristen Alewine

Ephesians 2:10 “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, *which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.*”

Over a year. That's how long it took me to save up \$800 for a trip some lifelong friends and I were planning to go on. We had never taken a trip like this and I was so excited! Then right as we were about to book our flights, enter COVID-19. No more travel. No more being with people who don't already live in my house. Bye-bye girls' trip. I stuck the money in a drawer and reminded myself that God is bigger than my disappointments.

I know everyone reacts to crises differently, but when something big enough to affect the entire globe is happening, it makes us all switch gears in one way or another, many of them not great: panic and hoard, focus on all the things we're missing out on, complain about every governmental decision that we don't agree with, etc. Whatever the case, our eyes are easily

taken off of Christ and His work in the world as we're distracted by all the changes happening around us.

I was talking to a friend a few days ago who works in an industry that got hit early and hard by everything shutting down. I knew it had to be tough for him, so I asked him how things were

Even when the whole world feels like it's on pause, God's plans don't pause.

going. Throughout the course of the conversation I felt more and more like God was telling me He had something for me to do here. To make sure I was hearing Him correctly, I kept asking my friend questions until I found out his rent was due that day and this was the first time ever he wouldn't be able to pay it. I had one

question left for him, but I felt pretty confident I already knew the answer. “How much is your rent?” “\$800.” I immediately sent him the money. And in that moment God proved to me again that there is so much more joy in getting to be in on His plans than in any I've made for myself. “The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps.” (Proverbs 16:9) I laughed, thinking about all those months I thought I knew what I was saving for when He had an entirely different plan in mind the whole time.

Even when the whole world feels like it's on pause, God's plans don't pause. There are specific things He planned for me to do and for you to do during these months! Don't let yourself get so caught up in worrying and analyzing that you forget God is moving, and that He's invited you to move with Him!

Bulletin Board

What People are Saying

“Thank you for the notes and prayers. In this difficult time when we are confined to our home, it is encouraging to hear from you.”

“Thank you for the newsletter. It is encouraging.”

“I read the article called Courage in the last newsletter. I remain grateful in all circumstances.”

“Thank you for the financial gift to help our family.”

Message from Dan

Thank you for the opportunity to send this message to you. I leave you with a promise we share with our family: “Do not be afraid, O Zion; Do not let your hands fall limp. The Lord your God is in your midst, a victorious warrior. He will exult over you with joy, He (you) will be quiet in His love, He will rejoice over you with shouts of joy.” (Zephaniah 3: 16b & 17) We appreciate your support. At this time in history, your prayer and

donations are extremely helpful in continuing the ministry. We trust you are experiencing Christ as your hope and His presence in your lives.

Sincerely, Dan

