

Lessons You Can Learn From an Ancient Street Preacher

Do you read your Bible every day? Are you in the joyful and strengthening habit of opening the Word of God and reverently allowing the precious and eternal words to restore your soul?!

There is nothing quite like it ... just taking 10 or 15 or 30 minutes out of a busy day ... laying everything else aside ... and then opening the sacred and life-changing book called the *Holy Bible*.

It is God's missive to His children. It is heaven's love letter to those who are stationed in an outpost far, far away. The Bible is a how-to manual, a blueprint for life, and an extraordinary and miraculous peek into the heart of God.

Who wouldn't want to read their Bible?

I have been completely undone recently by the book of Ezekiel. First of all, who reads Ezekiel for insight and wisdom? Surely, the Proverbs or the Psalms of David would be a more likely source of hope and joy. However, I am discovering that the Holy Spirit is well able to use the words of a street preacher who lived nearly 3,000 years ago to speak life into my weary ministry and discouraged heart.

The message of Ezekiel echoes through the centuries and finds a welcome home in the heart of this woman whose chief desires in life are to obey God and to proclaim the Word of God. I have found that Ezekiel and I have much in common.

God asked Ezekiel to do some pretty crazy things! Ezekiel positioned himself on his side for 390 days and during that time ate only one meal a day that was cooked over manure! You've got to be kidding me, God! This prophet by the name of Ezekiel shaved his head and his beard in a prophetic

demonstration and also refused to prolong his grief over the death of his beloved wife. Ezekiel heard intimately and in detail the instructions of the Lord and then faithfully obeyed.

I can do no less.

I am committed, like Ezekiel, to fearlessly preach the Word of God and to obey God, whatever He asks of me.

When God asks me to go to India ... I will go.

When God asks me to write a book ... I will do it.

When God asks me to share my faith with the agnostic sitting next to me on the plane ... I will willingly do it.

When God asks me to encourage the young mom in line at the grocery store ... I will do it.

When God asks me to pay for the elderly person's lunch at a restaurant ... I will do it.

When God asks me to take get out of my safe boat ... I will do it.

When God asks me to write a letter to someone who needs encouragement ... I will do it.

When God asks me to produce a daily radio show ... I will do it.

When God asks me to walk by faith and not by sight ... I will do it.

When God asks me to pray for healing for a person I encounter at the drug store ... I will do it.

God told Ezekiel that when he obeyed the voice of the Lord that Ezekiel would then know that God was truly the Lord. I am learning from Ezekiel that obedience clarifies our vision of who God is capable of being in one ordinary person's life.

Obedience to God's voice also sets into motion the timing of God's plans for an individual's life. When I choose to obey the personal message God has spoken to me, God will move heaven and Earth to set His plan into action!

As I read my Bible this morning, the message of the Lord to Ezekiel was the message of the Lord to me, *"None of my words will be prolonged anymore, but the word I have spoken shall be done, says the Lord God"* (Ezek. 12:28, MEV).

My heart cries out, "Yes! Amen!" to the words that God spoke to Ezekiel almost 3 millennia ago. I deeply desire for the plans and purposes of God to hit the assigned mark in my life. I am done with delays and disappointments. The time is now for God's promises to come to pass in this ordinary girl's life! The word that God has spoken to me will be performed! The appointed time is now! {eo}

Carol McLeod is an author and popular speaker at women's conferences and retreats, where she teaches the Word of God with great joy and enthusiasm. Carol encourages and empowers women with passionate and practical biblical messages mixed with her own special brand of hope and humor. She has written five books, including *No More Ordinary*, *Holy Estrogen!*, *The Rooms of a Woman's Heart* and *Defiant Joy!* Her most recent book, *Refined: Finding Joy in the Midst of the Fire*, was released last August. Her teaching DVD, *The Rooms of a Woman's Heart*, won the Telly Award, a prestigious industry award for excellence in religious programming. You can also listen to Carol's "A Jolt of Joy" program daily on the Charisma Podcast Network. Connect with Carol or inquire about her speaking to your group at .