

1. **Hosea 6:2-4 (NIV) - .....As surely as the sun rises**

<sup>3</sup>” *Let us acknowledge the LORD; let us press on to acknowledge him. As surely as the sun rises, he will appear;”*

Sometimes this world.....and our own place in it.....appears very gloomy. Sometimes we are stuck at seeing the bad and cannot ever see it getting any better. Our focus gets caught in a rut and we can't see the light. All of us experience this from time to time and some of us are experiencing this gloom right now. When that health diagnosis comes back, life can look pretty bleak. When that marriage fails, the dark clouds come. When you lose a precious loved one, it seems oh so dark. Today, the nation and the world is facing the most recent pandemic of Covid 19 and for some it seems as though it will never end.

But there are at least two Biblical remedies that can change the focus when we only see doom and gloom. First, every (not just some) but every circumstance in life is an opportunity to praise God and to serve Him. On its face, this idea sounds ludicrous. How can that crippled leg, be an opportunity? How can my cancer diagnosis be an opportunity? How can our devastating house fire be an opportunity? This is a hard teaching and one that many may not readily accept, but God is at work whether things go well or not. When times are tough God is still at work. Allow me to share one of the most moving stories that illustrates what I am trying to say here. This is the passing of Josh Moss, a 7 year old boy who died of leukemia. Josh's brother, Brian, was on my little league team that I was coaching and we felt it appropriate to dedicate the season to Josh and to often pray for him. Josh's story spread far and wide and many many other people became aware of Josh's plight and prayed for him. Well, as our baseball season ended by winning a championship, Josh's life also ended as he lost his battle and died. We were devastated and so were so many others involved in fervent prayer for Josh. How could this happen? How could God allow Josh to die at the precious age of seven? Things seemed so unfair and so .....well .....gloomy!

Many members of our team and I went to Josh's large funeral and I will never forget the essence of the message the Pastor shared. He mentioned that yes Josh only had seven years but in that short time, he had major successes for the Lord's work. During his illness Josh brought many many more people to pray and to Christ than many of us will do in our normal lifetime. These words changed my perspective. In the gloomiest and most dire of circumstances Josh's life had opportunities for good. And the wonderful secret of our lives is that this is true for us as well. When those troubling dark days come..... as they surely will....there is a gold nugget that can be found in the darkest of places.

The second, thing that changes our focus is a simple exercise. All we have to do is observe the everyday occurrence of the sun rise. Sun rises are faithful. They point to the faithfulness of the One who created this world and universe. One of the great lines in a great *great* hymn entitled "Be Still My Soul" is the line; "In every change He faithful will remain." Life is full of changes, but through them all God is at work and 'He faithful will remain.' It is His faithfulness that can change our focus and lift our spirits.

*There is no darkness that can hide His light.*

*There is no gloom that can thwart His promises.*

*There is no force that can separate us from His love.*

Two focus changes that lets the light shine into any soul experiencing gloom and darkness.

Praise God because, "*As surely as the sun rises, he will appear.*"