

## Faith, Hope and Love

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Do you ever have days when you wonder what on EARTH you are doing? When you ask yourself WHY you are the wife of this man, the mother of this family, the owner of this business, working for this company, running this ministry, homeschooling these kids, living this life on this earth?? Are you sometimes weary and frustrated - does it all seem too much, too hard, too impossible?

Oh, dear one, we ALL feel that way at times! But, on one of the days when I was feeling that way, I turned to the Lord, opened my Bible, and this is what I read:

*"We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thess 1:3 (NIV)*

The three phrases I have underlined hit me right between the eyes. Here, Paul is writing to the Thessalonians to build them up and encourage them. But, these words are timeless, and just as much directed to us today - us wives and mothers in all our daily struggles and trails.

Think about this for a moment. Think about all the things you do in your life - all the facets of who you are. Ask yourself, WHY do you do these things? WHO are you working for? Is it for yourself, or for your husband, or because of other's expectations? Or is it because of your faith in God - your faith that he put you right THERE, right where you are, to fulfill his specific plan and purpose for you life? If you can answer yes to that last question, then the work that you do is produced out of the faith that you have in your Father God!

My friend, God loves you, and has a specific plan and purpose for your life. You know that, right? But have you EMBRACED it!? Have you accepted that God's plan may not be glamorous or public; it may not involve riches and acclaim here on earth. It very likely does involve hard work, sleepless nights, dirty jobs and thankless devotion. BUT, it is STILL part of God's plan for YOU. If you are married, then God has called you to be a wife. If you have

children, then he has called you to be a mother. What else has he called you to do? Check each aspect of what you do against whether God called you to do it, or you just took it on. If God has NOT called you to it, but you just took it on, then you might just have found the source of much of your frustration! But, if he DID call you to do it, then you can rest assured that he never calls us to anything, without enabling us to do it, and providing all that we need!

"Work produced by faith." Is your work produced by faith? It can be! If you do something because you know God wants you to do it, and you believe he will help you, and that he watches over you and will reward you, then you're doing it in and by faith. If you do something which God has called you to do, even though you have no idea HOW you're going to do it, then you're working by faith. If God has called you to homeschool, or to write books, or to reach out to someone, and you step out and do it, you are working by faith.

"Labor prompted by love." Look at why you do things again - is it because of love? Your love for God, whom you serve, your love for your husband and your children, your love for other people? Let that love overflow into the things you do! Do things out of love, not grudgingly.

Labor. To me that means hard work! When someone says the word labor, what do you think of? Giving birth? Breaking rocks? Back-breaking work? Steady work, working long hours. Laboring. Working. For LOVE!

"Endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ." Endurance. Not exactly a fun word, because it implies having to hang in there when the going gets tough. And it will get tough, at least at times. But we endure. Why? Because of our HOPE in Christ. What hope is that? The hope that he has gone before us and prepared the way. That he is coming again, and that he will take us to heaven to be with him. That he will reward us, that he watches over us, that he will never leave us or forsake us.

Faith, hope and love. What do they look like in the every day world in which we live? They look like this:

**Work, Labor.....Endurance!**

When you have a tough day, remember these verses. Remember that your work is produced by faith, that your labor is prompted by love, and that your endurance is inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. And it is sooooo worth it in the end!

I've written 1 Thess 1:3 out, with the three phrases in a contrasting colour, and put them on the wall above my computer. Whenever I begin to hear those little voices telling me it's not worth it, that I should just give up, I look up and read those words. I KNOW I am called to do what I do by God, and that my work is produced by faith, that my labor is prompted by the love God has placed in my heart for my husband, children, and all of you, and that I endure even when it's tough, because I am inspired by hope in Jesus Christ. What about you?

Love  
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