

## The Shells Message Part 1: Awaiting God's Promises; A key to opening God's next door

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Scriptures: 2 Tim 1:12, Ps 116: 1-9, Col. 3:3, Jer. 6:16

1. A shell found on a beach in February 2017. It jumped out from among thousands of shells. God speaks to us through nature like He does through Scriptures
2. 2 Tim 1:12. Context. Wartime like messages of urgency to Timothy. Paul waiting well. Both the messages and Paul's waiting methods are examples for us to live by.
3. Foundations on Waiting for God to fulfill His promises.
  - a. God isn't denying us, punishing us or withholding from us His good things. The wrath of God was fully satisfied at the cross. See 1 John 2:2, 1 John 4:10, Ps. 84:11
  - b. We need to pursue Holiness, a pathway word, not a perfection word, meanwhile. See 2 Cor 7:1, 1 Peter 1:16
  - c. God's plan for us also includes others, so let's cooperate with God and pray accordingly. See 2 Cor 5:15
4. The General Word given over the past several months.
  - a. Join or re-join Jesus as a junior yoke-fellow (Matt 11:28,29) and begin again with unbroken fellowship (John 15:9).
  - b. Take up your cross and follow Him (Matt 10:38 and Gal 2:20)
  - c. Unburden your soul from all that should be discarded or carried by Jesus, others or the future and God will give us joy in the midst of our pain and sorrow (2 Cor 6:10)
  - d. Learn to wait with joy and unlearn impatient waiting (Is. 30:18)
  - e. Surrender your will to God's will. If sadness experienced, grieve the loss (recall the rich, young ruler of Matt 19); sadness indicates it was too important to your heart anyway
  - f. Saying yes to God will save your life.
  - g. Part of our salvation inheritance is being saved from ourselves, from the lies we have believed and from the false lovers we've embraced who deliver only bondage. We respond by withdrawing into passivity, or, through striving (and then indulging) in an effort to force God's promises into fruition. This creates a life of frantic busyness, distracted from the voice and life of God and it doesn't work anyway (recall Ishmael from Sarah and Abraham's efforts to bring their heir into the world without God).
  - h. Sin is not to be trifled with but is the true cancer. Flee from it like Joseph did from Potiphar's wife (Gen 39). Sin is without remedy if we coddle it (Jer. 30:15)
5. The specific word given. Hospital visitor brought Ps. 116. "This has your name written all over it." We had been standing (correctly) on 1 Peter 2:24 and Matt 8:17 but God wanted something better and deeper. The word in the middle of the night after I cried out verse 4 "Oh Lord, please save my life!"
6. He said, "I am trying to save your life...but I will not force you. The choice is yours." (see also Romans 5:10). A deep silence followed.
7. Confession and repentance. Resisting God's voice delays the promise of restoration (Joel 2: 24-26). God is waiting for us to come around to His point of view. When we wait for God, and at the same time ignore what He has already told us to do, we will delay the promises. This is double-mindedness and won't bring answers to our prayers. (2 Tim 1:9, James 1:8)

8. Col. 3:3 Our life is hidden in God and our true life is in Jesus. Once I surrendered, I knew I was healed and that God had saved my life. My heart rejoiced with songs (Ex 15, Rev. 15). He has done great things for me! The same will be true for you. Then a door that had been shut was opened. Only God could have opened it. One small move toward God always brings disproportionately larger moves from Him.
9. We've been deceived. We have listened to the wrong voices. God just wants us, brokenness and all. Brokenness is a requirement for service because humble hearts are essential for loving others. (see John 13:17, 2 Cor. 5:14, Deut. 33:12)
10. We have come to a fork in the road. 2 paths ahead. Jesus calls us to take the old road with Him (Jer. 6:16). It is the pathway of life.
11. Prayer of decision and agreement. Abide in Christ (Hebrews 12:14) and open the door of your heart to God (Rev. 3:20, Is. 25:9, Heb. 10:36)
12. Benediction: 1 Peter 5:10, 11 from the Amplified Version
13. Music: "Do it Again" by Mack Brock, Elevation Music. "The Promise Still Stands."
14. Lesson: Obeying the voice of God today will usher in God's next things (His promises made to us and kept by Him for us). His desire for us is joy through unbroken fellowship with Him.