

God Never Blinks: 50 Lessons for Life's Little Detours (Brett, Regina)

When in doubt, do the next right thing. It's usually something quite small. As E. L. Doctorow said, writing a book is like driving a car at night. "You never see further than your headlights, but you can make the whole trip that way."

LIFE IS GOOD.

A house painter by trade, he lives by two simple words: Get to.

It's scary to make major changes, but we usually have enough courage to take the next right step. One small step and then another. That's what it takes to raise a child, to get a degree, to write a book, to do whatever it is your heart desires.

The book says that a life which includes deep resentment leads only to futility and unhappiness. Resentments, it says, shut us off from the sunlight of the Spirit. In the chapter "Freedom from

You want to be free of anger, hate, resentments? You set others free first. By setting her ex-husband free, Jane freed herself from the first part of her life and her children freed themselves for rest of their lives.

I made endless to-do lists but forgot my own basic needs because the world couldn't turn without me. That's how important I was.

don't always understand how God works, but I still pray. It's like that old saying, I don't understand how electricity works, either, but I don't let that keep me in the dark.

He told me that God wants a real, authentic, genuine relationship with us, the same kind of openness and honesty you have in a good marriage.

"Brett wasn't handicapped. He showed us what God expects from us: to celebrate every time we take a breath."

He'd be the first to say God never gives us more than we were designed to carry. Some of us were designed for more, some for less. No matter what, even if we are asked to carry a portion of sky, it is beyond bearable. It is gift.

"How will I ever believe that I'm good enough?" The answer came in that small still voice from my heart: "By helping others believe that they are good enough."

To paraphrase Buechner, the place God chose for you is the intersection where your greatest joy and the world's greatest need meet.

You can compare yourself to those above you and whine or compare yourself to those below you and gloat, or you can stay focused on that man or woman in the mirror and embrace his or her unique assignment with gratitude.

"It is not our abilities that show what we truly are. It is our choices."

Choice, not chance, determines your destiny. It's up to you to decide what you are worth, how you matter, and how you make meaning in the world. No one else has your gifts—your set of talents, ideas, interests. You are an original. A masterpiece.

To paraphrase her, if you have faith, you can see beyond the limitations of most vision. You can see the light of a “now” where others see only the darkness in the “not yet.”

That night took him to the essence of what it means to be Franciscan: when your only attachment is to God and to love, you have everything that matters. He had worn the long, simple brown robe of Saint Francis for 20 years, but that was the moment he became a Franciscan.

He decides that it comes down to a simple choice: “Get busy living or get busy dying.”

Someone once told me the difference between a rut and a grave is this: a rut has a little more room to move around. When I find myself in a rut, I know I better get out fast before it becomes a grave.

It took constant discipline to ignore the calendar. It took vigilance to put blinders on to block out every day except the one called today. I made every day a do-over. Each morning, I would start from scratch: forget all about yesterday, and not even think about tomorrow. I'd try to just live in today.

“This is the day that the Lord has made. I will rejoice in it and be glad.”

Andre Dubus once wrote in “A Father’s Story”: “It is not hard to live through a day, if you can live through a moment. What creates despair is the imagination, which pretends there is a future, and insists on predicting millions of moments, thousands of days, and so drains you that you cannot live the moment at hand.”

She once wrote, “When God is going to do something wonderful, He or She always starts with a hardship; when God is going to do something amazing, He or She starts with an impossibility.”

The comedian George Carlin, when asked how old he was, once replied, “I’m one, I’m two, I’m three, I’m four, I’m five...” and on and on up until his present age.

Life is too short to waste doing anything boring or joyless.

“Overprepare and go with the flow.”

Now he approaches every unfamiliar situation by putting in extra time and preparing more than anyone else. He used to be envious of guys he thought were smarter than him. Then he realized the only difference between him and them was that they did their homework.

“I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. I did not wish to live what was not life, living is so dear.”

Perpetual quietness of heart. That's what I truly want underneath all those things I think I want. To be at rest when nobody praises me. That is true freedom.

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Happiness isn't getting what you want. It's wanting what you already have.

So many times I want what I want and can't see at all the small needs of anyone else around me, much less the big needs.

That's the secret. You attract everything that comes into your life by the thoughts you hold. You create your life with your thoughts.

Einstein said, "There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is." Here's to miracles.

I heard a guy say that his whole life used to be centered on me, me, me. He was trying something new, making his life about we, we, we. The Jesuits call that being a man for others.

There's so much living to be squeezed into the cracks of one little day. You can make someone laugh, smile, hope, sing, think. The most important day of the year isn't Christmas or Easter, your anniversary or your birthday. It's the day you are in, so live the hell out of that day alone.

If you want to change the world in a big way, you do your small assignments with greater love, greater attention, greater passion. Simply embrace the job you have, the family you have, the neighborhood you have, the task you have been given.

That impressed me. A man who showed up early made me feel valued. Respected. Appreciated. It made me realize how I offered none of that to others.

People think you're inconsiderate, incompetent, and self-centered—and they're right. You get a bad reputation. People think they can't count on you. If they can't trust you to show up on time, can they trust you to follow through with commitments? They don't take you seriously. Your word is no good.

Before you say anything about someone, ask yourself three questions: Is it kind? Is it true? Is it necessary?

And if those don't stop you, this Spanish proverb should: "Whoever gossips to you will gossip about you." That's a scary thought.

