



Bloom Where You Are Planted

LifeCare Memos® - Messages of Compassion

The Bloom Motto

“Bloom where you are planted.” That motto has been around for many years and it’s a great one. I typed those words on the Internet search engine, Google, and it identified 382,000 sites that relate in some way to that motto. Obviously I didn’t take the time to search all the sites but I was amazed at what I did find. You can attend seminars from Paris, France to Seoul, Korea that provide interpretations of that motto. You can purchase a wide variety of items with that motto printed on them...from banners and posters, note cards and greeting cards, to pictures and dolls, t-shirts, mugs, and even jewelry.

You can also read lots of sermons on the Internet that challenge us to “bloom where you are planted.” These words of challenge relating to the importance of embracing change, are often applied to transitions to a new city, a new church or a new career. I even found a website directed toward our Marines in Iraq. They were challenged to “bloom where you are planted” with these key directives: adapt, improvise, and overcome.

Here’s another quote that grabbed my attention:

*“Should you feel imprisoned by circumstances, it is worth remembering that **GOD** has a habit of producing blooms in the most inhospitable places.”*

Question: Can **GOD** produce blooms in the lives of His children who need to be in an assisted living or a long term care center? I believe He can—and does—because daily I see those who are committed to adapting, improvising, overcoming and blooming where they are planted.

Examples of Blooming

I am grateful that **GOD** sovereignly caused the path of my life to intersect with Bill. During one of our visits, Bill expressed his frustration that he couldn’t serve the **LORD** in the ways that he had in time past. **GOD** led me to encourage him to “bloom where he was planted” in the soil of our Care Center and to bring God glory in any way that he could.

I reminded Bill of the story of Joseph who was sold into slavery and taken to the land of Egypt. Joseph could have become bitter against **GOD**. Instead he chose to trust **GOD** and to “bloom” in the soil of Egypt where **GOD** had sovereignly planted him. Then I reminded him of the story of Daniel, who was taken by force from his home in Israel to the land of Babylon. Daniel could have become bitter against **GOD**. Instead he chose to trust **GOD** and to “bloom” in the soil of Babylon where **GOD** had sovereignly planted him. He went beyond just saying the words, and instead chose to heed the Word of the **LORD** to those living in Babylon:

*“Build homes, and plan to stay. Plant gardens...marry and have children. And work for the peace and prosperity of Babylon. Pray to the **LORD** for that city where you are held captive, for if Babylon has peace, so will you”*
(Jeremiah 29:6-7).

In the weeks that followed our conversation, I continued to encourage Bill to “bloom where he was planted.” And he did. At his last care conference with our staff, I sat and marveled at the ways Bill sought to draw their attention to his faith in Jesus. After the conference, I told him “You did a lot of ‘blooming’ in that meeting!” To the end, Bill manifested his desire to keep honoring his **LORD** by truly blooming in the soil where **GOD** had planted him.

Another friend of mine has recently been uprooted from overseas back to the States. I have been trying to encourage her to “bloom” where **GOD** has planted her. She wrote in reply,

“I’m trying to do just that “blooming where I’m planted”...in a way it feels weird — like I don’t yet know what **GOD** has in store...so my “blooming” is coming in baby steps, day by day. I’m trying to find the balance between rushing and stagnating.”

Ways to Bloom

So how **do** we “bloom where we are planted?” How do we find a balance between “rushing and stagnating”?

Several years ago in the devotional booklet, *Our Daily Bread*, there was an article about palm trees that grow from the granite sides of a 2,500-foot canyon in the Kofa Mountains of Arizona. They are the only native palms in the entire state. For years, botanists wondered how those tropical plants could flourish on the dark, almost perpendicular sides of this narrow gorge, especially since the sun reaches them only about two hours a day. They finally concluded that the stone walls of the canyon reflect sufficient light and store enough warmth throughout the day to enable these trees to thrive in this hostile environment.

Like those palm trees, people that live daily in close fellowship with **GOD** can survive, and even thrive, in hard and hostile soil. Even in the restricted crevices of pain where the sun of good health and good fortune seldom shines, those who delight in the **LORD**,

“Are like trees planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit each season without fail. Their leaves never wither, and in all they do they prosper” (Psalm 1:3).

The story is told of a sign that was placed outside a church in England. It read:

“It doesn’t matter where you live, as long as you live where you are.”

We don’t always understand and we certainly can’t control the soil into which **GOD** sovereignly chooses to plant us. But we can control our response to His placement. We can choose to live daily in close fellowship with **GOD**. We can choose to keep blooming in the soil where He has planted us so that one day when we stand before our Lord and Savior, we will hear Him say to us:

“Well done, good and faithful servant, enter now into the joy of your Lord”
(Matthew 25:23).

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When experiencing the stresses of life, people need support. The Psalmist needed that support and found it when he turned to God. He said, *“Look to my right and see; no one is concerned for me. I have no refuge; no one cares for my life. I cry to you, O LORD; I say, ‘You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living’”* (Psalm 142:4-5).

LifeCare Memos are designed as messages of compassion that integrate biblical guidelines for emotional and spiritual well-being. Topics focus on various life-care issues and address them from the perspective of Scripture.