

When God Interrupts, Finding New Life Through Unwanted Change

(M. Craig Barnes, IVP, 1996)

Jesus expects us to know that faith does not insulate us from the storms of life. (p. 138)

Christianity is fundamentally an experience in **losing the lives of our dreams** in order **to receive the lives Jesus died to give us.** Luke 9:57-62 (p. 17)

Given the choice between selling everything to blindly follow Jesus or **to return sadly to our old life**, we will choose the latter every time. **THAT IS WHY GRACE OFTEN COMES IN SEVERE WAYS.** (p. 18)

The call to repent and be converted still essentially means **to turn toward the work God's doing** in our lives. (p. 28)

Conversion always begins as God's terrifying initiative in our lives. To follow Jesus is to enter the life long process of discovering more about God than we know. Nothing makes it harder to see God than our expectations of Him. (p. 30)

God is always working just beyond our limits, inviting us to venture into the unknown... (p. 31)

Our common terrifying realization, that **life is not what we had thought**, binds us together in a unified confession that **God is mysteriously at work.** And in that confession, hope is conceived. (p. 43)

My job is to point them to their only Savior. It is impossible to do that if I try to be their savior. My tendency is to **help them recover their well-ordered lives.** But that may be the very thing **from which they most need to be saved.** (The Savior) has a tendency to lead us **away from** places in life **where we'd rather be.** (p. 45)

To mature as a follower of Jesus means **to be led to the same powerless places** he was led. (p. 47)

Grace is **whatever it takes...** it can be confrontational, frightening, etc., but **it saves our lives.** (p. 60)

The most important thing we do in responding to the call of God is **to show up.** We don't have to be certain, the best, or (even) have to want to be there. We are just responsible to show up with a vision of what God is doing in the world. [Implication: We are not responsible for making changes, Jesus is.] (p. 64)

The story of Job begins with him asking **why his confusing God is so arbitrary,** and it ends with his new appreciation for God's mystery. (p. 77)

Gratitude may be the ultimate vocation for the Christian ("a ministry of grace, passionate about Christ's mission in the world" is the mission statement of Barnes' church). (p. 95)

When the doubts appear, **the great temptation is for us to turn the blessing of God into ambitious goals** that we will get for ourselves. (p. 98)

We do not live by faith in God's intervention (but) by faith in God's grace **when there is no intervention.** (p. 100)

NO EVIL IS TOO GREAT FOR GOD TO REDEEM – that **THROUGH these hurts, not in spite of them,** we will be **instruments of care in the lives of others** (e.g., the story of Joseph: God intended it for good). (p. 112)

Don't expect Jesus to save us by teaching us to depend on the things we are afraid of losing. **He loves us too much to let our health, marriage, or work become the savior of our lives.** (p. 124)

When (God) interrupts, we're thrown into **a belief that is not clothed in anything that gives us comfort**, including our most cherished expectations of Him. We must discover **it's not what we know that saves us**, but **Who we love and Who loves us.** (p. 126)