

Her Story Quotes by Shari House

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"When God Says, 'Stay Put'"



What is the most frustrated type of Christian? Some may say it is the one who is backslidden and under conviction from the Holy Spirit? Others may say it is the one who is faithful to church and has a good relationship with the Lord but is constrained by outside things such as family, debt, or work that keeps them from doing as much as they would like to do for Him? And still others would say it is the one who is completely surrendered to God to go or do whatever His will may be only to hear Him say, **"Stay put."**

I'd say it is the last one, but to be honest, that might just be because the Lord has told me to "stay put" on two major things in my life recently. Actually, I've been in all three of these positions more than once over the years, and I think all three come with their own frustrations. They do, however, all have the same simple solution....**Let the Savior be your stay.** *Isaiah 26:3 "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee."*

For those who have chosen to spend their lives saying, "Yes, Lord, I'll go. Send me!!" it can be hard and frustrating when the Lord tells us to "stay put." Many a missionary has had their bags packed, figuratively and literally, only to have to wait on a visa or paperwork from some government office. It took just over a year to raise my initial support when I first went to Nigeria. I applied for my visa in plenty of time and just knew it would come by the time I was finished with my last meeting. It didn't. I sent several barrels on ahead of me in a container, finished my last meetings, and packed my bags....but my visa didn't come. I waited for a month....and then a second month....and my heavenly father reminded me He was in control....and then a third month....and then a fourth....and then I began to doubt if I got the Lord's timing right....and my earthly father reminded me of "The birth of a vision, the death of a vision, and the supernatural rebirth of a vision"....and then I waited for a fifth month.... and then a sixth....and then I began to doubt not only God's timing, but if I had actually gotten the Lord's calling on my life right....and then finally my visa arrived and before I knew it, I was on the plane headed to Nigeria. I don't remember what all I did during that six months of waiting. I'm sure the Lord used the time to grow my faith and trust in Him. I know I spent time helping in my home church in any way I could with the youth and special events, but only the Lord knows for what reason He asked me to stay put so long after I thought it was time to go.

A "Stay Put" directive from the Lord does not have to end in frustration, though. One of the things I have learned from the story of the Demoniac of Gadara is the blessing of staying put even when you want to go. Three of the Gospels tell us of this amazing life-changing story of a wild man filled with a legion of demons whom Jesus restored to sanity, but only Luke gives us the end of the story....the result of obeying the calling of "staying put."

The people of the city were frightened when they saw the man, who was completely insane and uncontrollable, sitting clothed and in his right mind. They were frightened when they saw that their herds of pigs had plunged down a ravine and drowned in a lake. On the other hand, the Demoniac from Gadara was not afraid. For the first time in years he was whole. He was clear-headed. He had a purpose for his life ... to follow Jesus and serve Him. When the people of the city told Jesus to leave, the healed man asked to go with Him. I know if Jesus had just worked in my life as He had in his, I'd never want to leave His side and would insist on going everywhere He went. But, Jesus told him, "No." Instead Jesus gave him two clear instructions....**Stay put** and **Speak out**.

The man obeyed completely. He did not argue. He did not try to reason Jesus into letting him tag along. He simply submitted and obeyed the command to stay and began speaking out about how Jesus had worked in his life. In Luke 8:40 we find the result of his obedience, "**...when Jesus returned, the people gladly received him: for they were all waiting for him.**" The man of Gadara's willingness to "stay put" was instrumental in many coming to know Christ as their Savior.

Six practical things to do when you want **"To Go"** but God has said **"To Stay."**

1. **Stay focused on the Lord.** Don't become disheartened.

The Lord surely has a plan, and in time all will be revealed.

2. **Stay in a position where God can use you and reward you.** Don't become disillusioned.

When God says, "Stay" it is sometimes tempting to feel like "throwing in the towel" so to speak. Don't let the devil trick you into self-pity. Keep your focus on Christ.

3. **Stay listening to God's leading.** Don't become deaf.

Continue seeking the Lord's direction through your Bible reading, preaching, and godly counsel. Your "Stay Put" may actually only be a "Wait for a While."

4. **Stay serving.** Don't become distant.

Continue meeting the needs of others that the Lord brings across your path where you are. Practice your Esther 4:14 type of living – "For such a time as this."

5. **Stay doing whatever work you have been doing.** Don't become discouraged.

Don't fall into the trap of thinking that another work for the Lord is more important than the work you are doing right now where you are. Now is not the time to quit.

6. **Stay soul-conscious.** **Don't become disengaged.**

The Lord may have someone in your neighborhood, in your family, at your work, etc. that needs you to speak out and tell what great and wondrous things the Lord has done for you.

The call **"To Go"** gets a lot of attention, and so it should, but sometimes God calls us **"To Stay."**

We must be willing to answer either call.