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Daily Devotionals

“Changing Eras” – Thomas Dwyer

ANNCR: May 20th, “Changing Eras.” Where do you want to be in 5 years? You’ve probably been asked this question before. Maybe in an interview, or maybe by a close friend who wanted to help you work toward the desires God has given you. And how about now? Are you where you pictured you’d be 5 years ago? As humans, we love it when things make sense. We want to be able to see the end from the beginning. But the truth is, life is a winding road, and we often find ourselves asking, “How did I get here?” What we will face is unpredictable, and if we are not careful, we can be led to places we never expected. Today we’ll meet a man whose life turned out completely different than how it had begun. He’s here to share with us his true story on this Unshackled Daily Devotional.

TOM: My name is Tom Dwyer. Growing up I was upbeat and fairly happy, in spite of being born with one leg much shorter than the other and missing a finger and toe. By the time I was ten, my leg was three inches shorter than the other, so I had corrective surgery. Doctors warned me not to play sports; but I played every game there was,

and never once thanked God for protecting me. I knew He was there, but He felt distant.

My father's death by heart attack when I was eighteen relieved me of authority in my life. I drank and felt sorry for myself and then became angry at God for giving me the deformities. When I was 24, drinking affected my marriage. My wife became pregnant. I became very anxious. What if our child was born with my deformities? Well, even though our baby son was healthy, I fell into depression.

I tried going to church and reading the Bible, but my depression deepened. When my wife and mother suggested I check into a psychiatric hospital, I threw myself on God's mercy. One day while I was working and reciting Psalm 23, Christ suddenly became real to me. I prayed that night, asking Him to be my Lord and Savior, and the depression lifted completely.

ANNCR: King David begins Psalm 23 with the statement, "*The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.*" In the following verses, he describes scenarios of peace and triumph...but also of terror and heartache, traveling through "*the valley of the shadow of death.*" In this Psalm, David describes the seasons he has lived through – from joy to sorrow and back again. But, there is a precursor to it all. As

believers, we never walk the road of life alone. We have a protector and companion, a Good Shepherd. So, no matter what comes our way, even if it feels like our life has been derailed, or it looks much different than we ever imagined, God is still with us. And we can *“dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.”* Will you receive this truth today?

CREDITS: Unshackled Daily Devotionals are produced by Pacific Garden Mission along with our Unshackled Audio Dramas. To find even more true stories of God’s saving, transforming power, visit our website, unshackled.org.

This episode was written by Kennetha Gaebler and Elizabeth Kupferschmid and narrated by Tim Gregory and Ray Van Steen.

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