

Through The Darkness Into Sunlight

When New Year's Day dawned in 1942 our nation was still in severe emotional shock as a result of the attack on Pearl Harbor just three weeks earlier. There was a widespread sense of uncertainty. Personal dreams and plans for a future were suspended indefinitely. Most of the young men summoned to meet the challenge of tyranny were completely inexperienced and unprepared for the bloody mission they were summoned to undertake. They had not the slightest clue as to where their call to duty would take them—it was indeed a journey into foreboding darkness.

A little daily devotional book, "On Guard," by Joseph R. Sizoo was distributed to our military personnel. It consisted of 365 short paragraphs. The purpose of these readings was to offer just a bit of spiritual support and direction to these youngsters each day they lived in the frightening and stressful atmosphere of danger and death. For the first day of this New Year, Dr. Sizoo wrote,

I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year, "Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown." He replied, "Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God. That shall be to you better than a light, and safer than a known way."

This remains true *every* new year. While we might sometimes wish we knew exactly what lies ahead, in our more sober, more thoughtful moments we know that it's better not to know. If we actually knew how hazardous the year to come will be, we would surely do our best to avoid the journey—and that would be more destructive to life's purpose than any crisis that might confront us along the way. Besides, the brightest earthly light will never illuminate our path beyond the next bend. Lighted or darkened, a treacherous jungle is still a treacherous jungle and we are ill equipped, of ourselves, to protect ourselves even from many of the disasters we see coming. How much more comforting it is to walk the dark path of life hand in hand with one who knows every step of the way into radiant sunlight, and who is committed to bringing us safely into it!

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