

## Daily Devotional, November 2, 2020 Having the Right Heart

***<sup>9</sup> Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. <sup>10</sup> Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers". Galatians 6:9-10 {NIV}***

J.R.R. Tolkien was a one of the great writers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. A professor of language and literature at Oxford University, Tolkien wrote poetry and full-length stories. He is most well-known for his great works of fantasy, *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*. His successful writings have led to J.R.R. Tolkien being known as the "Father" of modern fantasy literature.

In Tolkien's amazing fantasy, great armies battle for control of Middle-earth. The characters of this story are led by powerful elves, wizards, kings, and warriors who use their skills and powers to influence and control the world around them. This amazing story quickly captures your imagination. Each of the powerful characters do amazing things, but it is not those characters who are the centerpiece of the story.

The main character of the *Hobbit* is a small, ordinary hobbit named Bilbo Baggins. Bilbo lives a quiet life in a quaint little community filled with other Hobbits. Bilbo is unexpectedly caught up in a great adventure, led by the wizard, Gandalf. The adventure goes through amazing and challenging geography. Along the way, they encounter challenges and battles of every kind. Part way through the story, the great elf, Galadriel, asks a question of Gandalf. She wants to know why he has included the little hobbit in this grand adventure. After all, the hobbits were only seen as Halflings – very small, half-sized people.

Gandalf's response is such a powerful reminder to us today about how we can be helpful in the world around us. Gandalf responds to the mighty elf, "Some believe it is only great power that can hold evil in check, but that is not what I have found. It is the small, everyday deeds of ordinary folk that keep the darkness at bay. Small acts of kindness and love. Why Bilbo Baggins? Perhaps because I am afraid, and he gives me courage."

Each day, we look around and see great challenges lying before us. The news is filled with never-ending news about COVID-19, political battles, natural disasters, from wildfires to hurricanes, and overwhelming economic problems. It is easy for us to look at these big problems and think that we are too small, too insignificant to make a difference. That is simply not true. When we offer acts of kindness and love in our everyday lives, we make a difference. As the stories of the Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings play out, you find that the smallest of characters make the biggest contributions. That is how life is. "It is the small, everyday deeds of ordinary folks that keep the darkness at bay. Small acts of kindness and love." No matter how small you feel, YOU can make a difference in the lives of others. Don't ever believe differently!

**Prayer: Lord, help us to pray like the early church who prayed together, praying to you and praying passionately for others. May your hand be with us and may we too see a great number of people believing and turning to the Lord. In Christ's name, Amen.**