

Daily Devotional, May 4, 2021 We Can All Make a Difference

“So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all, and especially for those of the family of faith.” Galatians 6:10 (NIV)

J.R.R. Tolkien was one of the great writers of the 20th century. A professor of language and literature at Oxford University in England, Tolkien wrote poetry and full-length stories. He is best-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 the land of Middle-earth. The characters of this story are led by powerful elves, dwarves, wizards, kings, and warriors who utilize their skills and powers to influence and control the world around them. This enthralling story quickly catches your imagination. 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 picturesque little community filled with other Hobbits. Bilbo is unexpectedly caught up in a great adventure, led by the wizard, Gandalf. The adventure goes through beautiful and challenging geography. Along the way, they encounter challenges and battles of all kinds. Part of the way through the story, the great elf, Galadriel, asks a question of Gandalf. She wants to know why he has involved the little hobbit in this grand adventure. After all, the hobbits were only seen as Halflings – very small people.

Gandalf’s response is such a powerful reminder to us today about how we can be helpful in the world around us. Gandalf gives this response 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 in front of us. The news is filled with never-ending news about COVID-19, political battles, natural disasters, and overwhelming 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 some of the biggest contributions, for often, they have the largest hearts. That is how life is. “It is the small, everyday deeds of ordinary folk that keep the darkness at bay. Small acts of kindness and love.”

Prayer: Lord, please use me today in any way You see fit. As You guide my thoughts and actions, please use me to bless others by following Your purposes more broadly. Rather than seeking my own will, help me to align with Yours. Thank you God, for the strength You bring me. In the name of your son Jesus, I pray, Amen.