



THE PASTOR'S VOICE

Encouraging A Christian Worldview

The Pastor's Voice Podcast Season 2: Episode 3

Transcript: Bite-Sized Devotionals

Reuel Sample: Terri Nightingale, welcome to the pastor's voice podcast, How are you today?

Terry Nightingale: I'm great, Reuel, thanks for having me on your show.

Reuel Sample: It is a pleasure to have you on the show, and I have to tell folks that if you can't tell from Terry's accent, he is from Australia. So we are doing this 13 hours apart. He is at seven o'clock tomorrow where we are six o'clock our time. So thank you very much for being free.

Terry Nightingale: Yes, I've jumped forward in time. How clever is that? So I'm actually an Englishman living in Australia. So if there are any Aussies listening to this and you're thinking you don't sound very Aussie, it's because I'm actually English

Reuel Sample: And see Terry. Only only Aussies and the English would know the difference. Over here in America, that all kind of gets pushed into the wiggly, wobbly of of non-American accents.

Terry Nightingale: Yes, that's OK. So we'll put put myself in that bracket. You are a non-American.

Reuel Sample: Terry, tell me about your ministry. You are a pastor, but you're also the host of a podcast.

Terry Nightingale: Yeah, so I'm a pastor, I became a pastor later in life. I have been for most of my working life. I have been involved in Christian education, Christian schools, that sort of thing, both in the UK and out here in Australia. But since coming to Australia, the call to serve God in pastoral ministry became a lot stronger. And so I'm now currently serving in a church called Southern River Church of Christ, which is in a suburb called Southern River. Believe it or not. So I have the joy of servants and wonderful people here. And yeah, in recent years, I've got involved in blogging and podcasting, and that's not something I planned to do, but just kind of happened. And, you know, sometimes you just have to try things you know, in in the Lord's leading and see, is that bearing fruit? Is that just something I want to do? Is that something God wants me to do? And so it seems at the moment that's something God wants me to do.

Reuel Sample: Your podcasts are four minute devotions.

Terry Nightingale: Yeah. So the story behind that and in fact, I must I'm going to confess to you and your audience that I didn't have the purest of motives when I when I started my blogs and podcasts because I had had I had had an idea for a book, which I had been writing for a while and it when I was given the opportunity to publish it, which was amazing. Somebody said to me, Oh, you know, who's going to buy your book? You're nobody. They said, great encouragement, you know? And they said, You know, you need an electronic platform. You know, you need to get your name out there and all that sort of thing. And and I thought, Well, OK, maybe I'll do a blog, you know? So that really isn't the best motive for for, you know, sharing thoughts about about being a Christian or sharing God's word with people. But what happened was, you know, I did pray about it and and I started a blog called for minute devotions. And the idea really is just to encourage people, help people to be in the word of God every day. And I mean, I've I've always loved his word. Ever since I became a Christian a long time ago when I was 19, one of the first things God gave me was just a love for the scriptures. And so I love to share those things, you know, with others, which I guess is one reason why I became a pastor eventually.

Terry Nightingale: But I started writing these blogs and putting them out there, and to my great surprise, I started getting some positive feedback, people saying, Hey, that was just what I needed to hear today, and thank you for sharing that that really helped me. And so I thought, Oh, praise God, you know, I might or might not have had the best motives for starting this in terms of, you know, just getting an electric platform. But God, in his grace is using them anyway. And then I guess the podcast thing, I guess I realised that a lot of people are audio processes. You know, some people prefer to listen to things. That's why I guess things like audiobooks are now very popular. A lot of people prefer to listen than to read. And sometimes it's convenient, isn't it? You know, travelling to work or going out, running or something? It's great to have something to listen to. And so it just seemed a sensible step forward to just take some of those Four-Minute devotions as a blog and just to read them as a four minute podcast. So there's a bit of music on there and a few other bits and pieces as well. But I don't know if they're the shortest podcast on the planet. I don't know if there's anything shorter than four or five minutes. Maybe there is, but that's what they are. And again, you know, people seem to find them helpful. So I'm grateful for that.

Reuel Sample: Well, it's a testament to your faithfulness. It's also a testament to how the spirit works. These are great devotions, ladies and gentlemen, and they are filled with a lot of deep stuff in four minutes. And that's that is purely an action of the Holy Spirit.

Terry Nightingale: Hmm. Thank you.

Reuel Sample: You're welcome now it's it's four minute devotions, the podcast, and you are found on all of the major podcasts host.

Terry Nightingale: Yes, that's right. That's right. Yeah, I lose count of how many there are.

Reuel Sample: And they keep growing. Yes. Now you, I want to get back to how you went, how you came from the UK to Australia to take up the role of pastor. But I also want to talk about. You are also a writer. You have indeed published some books.

Terry Nightingale: Yes. Yes, so. So I sort of developing writer, I guess you'd say that actually, may I tell you my story because I was telling someone else on another podcast this recently? And well, it's interesting, you know, with looking at exploring what your gifts are. And on this other podcast, we were talking about how you discover God's gifts that God's given you. And with writing, I always I felt for a long time that there was certainly a desire in my heart to be able to express things in written form. And you know, I've done little things like little articles for sort of church magazines, you know, that kind of thing. But when it came to writing something a bit more substantial, I didn't really have any experience. And you know, sometimes I think with the creative arts, we can sometimes believe that, well, the Holy Spirit is just going to deposit some complete thing in our hearts and it's going to be great and it's going to be perfect. And maybe that happens with other people. But with me, I think, you know, if God gives us a gift, we have to learn to grow that gift and and craft it and hone it and improve on it, you know? And so with writing, I had an idea back in the early 2000s of a Christian science fiction story.

Terry Nightingale: Now, my wife and I are really into science fiction. We just love all of that stuff. But anyway, I had an idea for a time travel story with a strong Christian message to it, and it was called time and again. And I thought this, I thought, This is the best thing on Earth. You know, this is going to go all the way around the world. It's going to be a bestseller. And I wrote it all out and you know, I couldn't get a publisher, couldn't get a publisher. And in the end, I self-published it and I sold a few hundred copies really to friends and family here in Perth. And that was it. And I thought, Oh, you know, I'm obviously, you know, not that good. But, you know, over time, I then I then spent some time at Bible College doing a master's degree, and you do a lot of writing when you are studying, of course, and did some other writing as well until eventually a number of years later. I published a book this year earlier this year, and to my great surprise, there was a publisher that was interested in the book that I published this year. And when I looked back on the the science fiction book that I wrote years ago, I started to read it again and I thought, Oh my goodness, this is terrible.

Terry Nightingale: This I am not surprised. Nobody wanted to publish this. And what I realized was that over time, and I'm not saying I'm there because I'm not, you know, there are many, many writers way better than me. But what I realized was that I needed time to improve and improve and improve, to get to a point where somebody might look

at it. And that really taught me something. And I think that, you know, it's it's worth kind of sharing that more broadly to people maybe who who have a heart for things like music or or, you know, whatever the art form is writing that, you know, usually in my experience, anyway, God doesn't just deposit a whole thing in your heart. Actually, he requires us to work at it and work at it and work at it and improve and improve because he's given us gifts to work with, you know, so, so yeah. So, so then eventually I so in fact, I am now one of the things I'm doing as a hobby at the moment is I'm actually looking at my old science fiction story and I'm reworking it in the light of maybe having grown a little bit in the last few years. So I'm hoping maybe, maybe that might come out at some point.

Reuel Sample: I'm looking forward to it. I know the feeling if. If I ever want to get humbled, I go back and I read my sermons from my first few years in in the ministry and realized my congregation showed a lot of grace.

Terry Nightingale: Absolutely. Absolutely. Yes, I know. Actually interesting you say that because I'm actually going going through my office at my, my office is going to change. I'm moving to a different room next year. And so I thought this is a good opportunity to declutter and actually go through stuff. And do I still need this, you know? And so I've found some of my old files of old sermons and I thought, Oh my goodness, I am not keeping that. That's embarrassing.

Reuel Sample: Burn, burn them now before somebody uses them as blackmail or something.

Terry Nightingale: Yes, exactly. Yes.

Reuel Sample: So the two books you have are bite sized devotions for the busy Christian.

Terry Nightingale: That's right. So the first one that came out is actually called looking back to move forward. And there's a subtitle that says embracing setbacks for greater fruitfulness. So that one came out first and then the more recent one bite sized devotions for the busy Christian that's actually based on the four minute devotions blog

and podcasts. So that's much more daily devotionals for people to use. But the first one is not daily devotionals. That's actually a book on a particular topic.

Reuel Sample: Well, we're going to have links of these books on our in our show notes and also on the broadcast page, so make sure that you check them out. Do you think Christians need to spend more time in their word, in the word? Is this one of the reasons why you came out with these bite sized devotionals, these four minute devotionals, just to get people into the word at some level on a daily basis?

Terry Nightingale: Yeah, absolutely, I think the word of God is under great attack at the moment. I think there are things in the word of God that some sectors of society don't like. I think there are some who are beginning to question whether they can trust that the word of God is historically know historically true. So people are starting to I think the term is deconstruct and they're they're doubting the validity of the testimonies. I think there's there's a lot of attacks on God's word. And I guess one of the things I want to do is to is to show that it's still has the power that it always has had to be the the way that God, a way that God speaks to us powerfully today.

Reuel Sample: And I I agree with you the word of God is is is under attack all over the world. Yeah. Why? Why do you think it is such a big target?

Terry Nightingale: Because it's the word of God, because we're in a spiritual battle, because it's it's the the the things that God wants to say to the people that he created, the people who have fallen away to follow their own path. The people that God sent his son to die for. You know, it is the communication of heaven to Earth. And if we're in a spiritual battle which the Bible tells us we are, then what's going to be attacked the most? It's going to be God's words. You know, the devil is going to try and twist them, that there was going to say that they're unreliable. The devil is going to say that there aren't. They aren't God's words at all. You know, our enemy, the devil. The Bible talks about our enemy. The devil is going to do everything you can to make us lose confidence in God's communication to us. And so I guess I feel that's what I want to say in my podcast and in my writings is, hey, one, this is absolutely God speaking to us. And two, it's still has the power that it always had.

Reuel Sample: It really does. It's amazing how relevant the Bible continues to be because it's authored by, it's authored by by God, who is unchanging. Yeah, and I think that's part of the problem is that is that we are in a post-modern society where truth is in the eyes of the beholder. And the whole idea that there is an absolute truth in in book form is a hard thing to swallow and it goes against. It goes against the the narrative.

Terry Nightingale: Yeah, I mean, people still want to do. It's interesting, isn't it, that there's this verse in, is it Timothy that says there will come a time when people will gather around them? People who who say what they're teaching is want them to say in a sort of last day sort of thing. And you know, I think we live in a culture where people only want to listen to what they want to listen to, you know, and it's uncomfortable to read the word of God. Sometimes you know that, of course, it's comfortable to in that. The Lord brings comfort. The Lord brings encouragement. The Lord shares his love with us, but it challenges us to, you know, the Bible isn't something that we can control and and say, this is my spirituality. No, we have to. We have to allow it to be the voice of God, challenging us and changing us. And that's not comfortable, but it's life.

Reuel Sample: There is a there is a there is a billboard in Knoxville, Tennessee, several years ago that had a big green couch on it, and it said a real period, comfortable period, church period. And sort of what you're saying is that the word of God is sometimes not comfortable, and sometimes I always wanted to go up on that sign and say Pick two because there are there. Most of the time, the word of God is not going to make you comfortable. And when we live in a society that seeks comfort and seeks to be not challenged in our in our preconceptions, it there's going to be there's going to be conflict.

Terry Nightingale: Another way, actually, that the word of God is maybe under attack is that there would be some Christian churches that that face the challenge of that. But unfortunately what they do is they they only preach on the nice bits, you know, they only preach on the bits that are comfortable, are encouraging, are making us feel better about ourselves, that kind of thing. And of course, you know, there are many, many passages that are a wonderful encouragement at different times in our lives and we need those. But if we only ever share those, then that's like feeding a family with ice cream all the time and no substantial meat. You know, we need we need to be fed with the whole word of God. And you know, another another aspect of that is that there will

be some that will say, who will just focus on the really tough parts of scripture? And they'll say, Oh, no, no, no, that can't be a God, you know, and they were, just write it off as well. Therefore, I can't believe any of it. But they've never really delved into, you know what those stories are actually saying and why they're there. In other words, they, you know, sometimes the word of God is a real challenge to chew over those stories and really think about them and really process them by the Holy Spirit and to to delve into, you know what, what God is teaching us through those stories. You know, there's uncomfortable instructions. There's uncomfortable stories, but they are. We need all of it to grow into the people God wants us to be.