

## **“...in the day of adversity consider (Ecclesiastes 7:14a)**

**Adversity** will pay every one of us a visit at one time or another. You can count on it. It is not IF It is WHEN. There is no one group in society that is immune from its snatching jaws and sharp claws. Whether on a global scale of the spectacular natural disasters and the soaring national debts, or on a local scene of marriage break ups and mental breakdowns, its fury and terror usually fills the hearts of its victims with fear and trepidation

**Adversity** comes in a complexity of shapes and considerable sizes – *family crisis, failure in health, financial losses, frustrating relationships; and/or friendship betrayals*, just to name a few. The majority arrive at the doorstep of our lives, unannounced, with no prior arrangement or a confirmed appointment, and without the simplicity of one-size fits all. Like door-to-door salesmen they just happen to be in the area, in such an inconvenient time! When they drop in on us, for what may seem to be some "unknown reason ", and visit us in the most "unexpected seasons", they usually bring with them their unwanted products and overstay their unwelcomed presence.

**Adversity** raises its ugly head when we're most vulnerable, physically worn out; emotionally drained; financially broke; and/or spiritually dry. It's when standing alone on the road side of difficulties; waiting for that promised assistance that never turns up; Looking up the sign that reads; welcome- you're now entering "Adversity-Ville"; Population - growing by the second.

### **THE OPTIONS**

So what can you do in those particular moments and painful minutes that feel like hours and drag on for days, and before you know it, the long days and lonely nights turn into short weeks and sick months and at the time it seems like eternity!

You can, either:

- 1. Feel sorry for yourself, blame others for your situation,, give up and take the law into your own hands .**
  1. OR
- 2. Find strength in God, believe Him for your solutions ,get up, and trust the Lord with all of your heart**

Now the first option is the worst choice, because

- ❖ You are conned into joining the vicious cycle of losers....
- ❖ You carry on with a victim mentality as you hand over the control of your present health and personal happiness to something or someone, which become your idol/s., *and*
- ❖ You choose to be on the losing side, and you stand to loose big, because you loose sight of God's presence and purpose in and for your life.

Also the first option causes yesterday's past hurts to block out the panoramic views of today's present help and tomorrow's possible vision of future hope. You gamble and waste precious energy as you rush and hurry to fill up your tank of aggression, only to find that the deposit of your energy fuel is hopeless and helpless.

Some decent folks are so focused in their pursuit for any measure of relief from their ongoing agony that they search anxiously for *that* miracle of "instant healing from their constant pain".

These dear souls may turn to an author of a book for counsel, or try the advice of a magazine article. Unable to sleep, they may tune in to a late night talk back radio, or trust an early morning religious personality and/or some "over-promising and under-delivering" self-styled guru, on TV.

Others allow the shock of disappointments or the pain of rejection, the testing of misunderstandings or the sorrow of setbacks, to make them BITTER, RESENTFUL and cause them to miss out on BETTER RESULTS and outcome. Their faulty thinking and faithless trust let a variety of trials and difficulties in their homes, churches and the workplace, steer them away from the truth and get them off track, chasing fruitless tasks. They get so discouraged as to give up, and in the process miss out on the great privilege of knowing GOD better and deeper in their relationship with HIM.

The truth, on the other hand and all along, is altogether quite a different story. The Bible, God's inspired revelation and final authority regarding life here on earth and the hereafter in eternity, never guaranteed nor even promised a life without adversity. In fact, in Psalm 11: 6 it is the wicked "who hath said in his heart.... I shall never be in adversity".

### **THE OPPORTUNITY**

Now whether adversity sneaks up on you and surprises you in the form of disappointment or disability, suffering or sorrow, rejection or rebellion, trials or tribulation, you still have the God-given responsibility and ability to make the RIGHT choice, i.e. *to respond rather than to react*.

This contrast is clearly illustrated in the lives of the Biblical characters of Job and Jonah of the Old Testament. You too may choose either to

**1. Respond** to the clear and dear voice of faith like Job, and *Trust God with your life*.  
"Though he slay me yet will I trust in him..." (Job 13:15a). **or**

**2. React** to the confusing and cheap noise of feelings like Jonah, and *ask God to take your life away*. "Therefore now, O LORD, take, I beseech thee, my life from me; for *it is better for me to die than to live*." (Jonah 4:3).

***The consequences depend on the choice that you make,  
not the circumstances that you find yourself in.***

If you chase the fleeting shadow of **Jonah**, your only hope of comfort is found in self-pity. Inevitably this will push you into the pit of despair, and all you're left with is FEELING sorry for yourself. The deceived one who goes down this path is writing off his or her earthly existence as an everlasting excuse.

Rather choose to follow the fine steps of **Job**, who trusted God even though he suffered greatly. First he lost all of his wealth and his children in just one day. Further he was smitten from head to foot with sore boils. Furthermore his servants turned their backs on him, the children in the streets despised and mocked him, and his friends accused him unfairly.

Finally if that were not enough, his wife nagged him to curse God and die. Yet Job's **response** was "Though he slay me yet will I trust in him."(Job 13:15a)

**God trusted Job *with* adversity  
and  
Job trusted God *in* adversity**

You too can trust God in the day of adversity because:

**GOD KNOWS** – “thou has known my soul in adversities”. (Psalm.31: 7b)

**GOD CARES** – “Casting all your care upon him; for he cares for you”. (1 Peter 5: 7)

**GOD HAS A PURPOSE** – “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose”. (Romans 8:28)

**Trust GOD**, not your feelings. Put your faith in HIM because:

"...With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible" (Mark 10:27)

"...For with God nothing shall be impossible" (Luke 1:37)

"...The things which are impossible with men are possible with God"(Luke 18:27b)

"...Be not afraid, only believe." (Mark 5:36)

As you trust GOD in the day of adversity, GOD in HIS time will turn your nightmare into sweet dreams.

**IN CLOSING-** And if you haven't as yet trusted The Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Saviour, and/or you are not sure of heaven as your eternal destiny, God invites you today to repent of your sin and receive His Son. The Bible makes it as simple as **ABC**:

**A**cknowledge you have sinned against God and broke His commandments ;( Psalm 32:5)

Because Adam and Eve broke God's first commandment in the Garden of Eden, and the entire human race broke His Ten Commandments given on Mount Sinai (*Compare Exodus 20:3 -17 with James 2:10*), we, the imperfect creatures and impotent sinners that we are now, all fail to measure up to God's standard and therefore fall short of His glory. Consequently there is death to face in this life and judgement to follow in the one to come

**B**elieve that Jesus Christ died for your sins and rose again ;( 1Thessalonians 4:14)

**C**all upon His name, right now, to save you *in time for eternity*. (Romans 10:13)

*The following suggested prayer is the most important request you'll ever ask God for in your lifetime!*

**Dear Lord God**

**I am sorry that I have sinned against you and broken your commandments;  
I turn away from my sins.**

**Please forgive me, and be merciful to me a sinner.**

**I believe Jesus Christ died for my sins and rose from the dead.**

**I receive You, Lord Jesus, into my heart as my Saviour and Lord.**

**Thank you dear Lord, for saving me, and for giving a new and eternal life.**

**I invite you to live your life through me, and  
to make me the person that You want me to be.**

**In Jesus Name, I pray, Amen**

When pain and suffering causes your heart to feel that God is out of sight, let prayer and singing comfort your soul with the fact that He is never out of reach.

Fortify your soul with God's unchanging truth that He allows trials in your life not to impair, hurt or burden you, but to improve, help and bless you.

*With the love of Christ*

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