

THE LORD WILL LIFT YOU UP!

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Problems Are A Part Of Life, Infancy, Childhood, Teenagers, Adulthood, Old Age, Treasured Memories, When Human Strength Fails, Looking Beyond Ourselves, Comfort In Our Tribulation, Enduring Hardness, Glorifying God Through Affliction, Trials Of Liberation, Godly Chastisement, Desperation and Repentance, The Source Of Our Victory, God's Mercy, He Will Lift You Up, Cast Your Burden Upon Him, Trust In The Lord, You Are His Forever, Satan's Lies And Attacks, The Shield Of Faith, God Truly Cares For You, Closing Remarks, Suggested Reading List

Problems, problems, problems; no one can deny that life is full of problems. From the time that we are born, until the day in which we die, we are each faced with one trial after another; and it seems that the older we become, the more difficult these battles seem to be. As an infant, we are limited by the fact that we are unable to speak; and thus sometimes we find it difficult to make our needs known to our parents. We become so upset just wondering when mom is going to change our soiled diaper, or how long it is going to take her to realize that we are hungry and want to be breast-fed. We look over there at dad sitting comfortably in his armchair reading the evening paper, or watching his favorite sport on the television set, and we impatiently ask ourselves what is taking him so long to realize that the reason we are becoming so upset, is because we want to be held in his arms. Life as a little baby sure can be hard!

In our childhood years, other problems may arise in the form of sibling rivalry, often motivated by pride and jealousy; or perhaps in the form of conflicts with other children at school. Perhaps we are ridiculed because of the way we act, or as a result of the way we dress, or maybe even due to our particular manner of speech. School-age children can truly be unmercifully hard on each other. While we as parents

sometimes make the mistake of viewing these things as minor incidents, and as a natural part of a child's growing-up experience which will eventually pass, to a small child at the time, these conflicts can appear as monumental obstacles in their lives. For some children, these clashes at school can be emotionally devastating experiences from which they might never recover.

As we reach young adulthood, our problems take on a new form. They may involve conflicts with our parents as we begin to want to exert our own freedom of thought, choice and expression. Learning to drive and getting our first car has caused stressful situations in many a family. We may also be confronted with peer pressure by kids at school who indulge in drinking, smoking or doing drugs. Relational conflicts may also become a part of our life if we are one who is prone to dating. So again, our trials continue.

Once we attain to full adulthood, the magnitude of our problems becomes even greater. When we enter the work force, we may have problems with our boss. Perhaps we feel that we rightfully deserve a raise, yet we are unable to get one. Or maybe we feel we are working harder and pulling the load for some of our more slothful co-workers, yet no one seems to do anything about it. There may also exist racial tensions, political tensions, or religious tensions at one's place of work. All kinds of problems can arise when one is employed in a group work environment. Directly related to this are taxes which rob us of a large portion of our wages, and endless bills which must be paid on time. While married life certainly has its rewards, it also is not without its trials as well. Misunderstandings arise. Conflicts in personal objectives occur. Methods of childrearing often clash. How to spend free time can result in an argument. Perhaps the two most serious problems which can plague married life is how to spend the money, and how and where to worship.

As we continue to advance in age, we begin to face even more life-threatening situations as the body begins to slowly break down. The eyes grow tired. The heart can't pump as well. The memory becomes unreliable. The hair begins to fall out. Different organs begin to malfunction. We lose our youthful strength. The back grows weak; etc. Aside from all of these physical ailments which sometimes accompany old age, perhaps one of our biggest enemies is loneliness. Our

family doesn't come around as much anymore. Most of our friends have already passed on. Perhaps we have even been forced to live a resigned life in a home for senior citizens. So up until the very end, this life offers one trial after another. By the time we reach the end of the road, some of us are more than thankful that it is all over, and we can now take our rest.

Of course, we can all be thankful that in most cases, our difficulties are not all lumped together. Rather, they are dispersed over many decades of our lives. If any of us had to face them all at one time, we would certainly throw up our hands in utter despair and call it quits. Thus, in between these hard times, we also have many wonderful moments and joyful fun-filled experiences. As we continue to grow and mature, we cherish these times as golden memories deep within our hearts. Even when our friends and loved ones sometimes fail us, these treasures of our thoughts serve to comfort us in our times of trouble and need. However, even these memories are not always enough. Sometimes our trials and tribulations are of such a degree, that the human spirit simply fails us, and we feel that we can no longer endure the troubles which beset us. Sadly, some people of the world resort to drugs or even suicide in order to overcome their problems.

Contrary to the philosophies of the world which teach us to look inward for necessary strength, it is at times like these that we must look beyond ourselves to a Higher Power. As Christians, we can comfort ourselves in knowing that, not only is there nothing new under the sun, but that we are not alone in the many trials, temptations and tribulations with which we are confronted. We have a worldwide family of dear brothers and sisters in the Lord who are going through the very same things as ourselves. This is precisely what we are taught in the Bible. Consider the following verses:

"The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun."

Ecclesiastes 1:9, KJV

"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation

also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

1 Corinthians 10:13, KJV

"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."

2 Corinthians 1:3-4, KJV

Thus we see that not only are our problems common to all men everywhere, but we also see that there is One who is willing and able to comfort us, and to help us through the trials which beset us. This is something which the unbelieving people of the world cannot look forward to. Sometime prior to his own martyrdom, probably after wicked Emperor Nero had begun his persecution of the fledgling Christian Church, the Apostle Peter wrote the following words which have served as an inspiration to many Christians. While they deal with persecution by a political body, Peter's words can also be equally applied to our personal trials and battles as well:

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf. For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

1 Peter 4:12-18, KJV

As I point out in articles such as "Love, Mercy, Forgiveness and Chastisement", when we do find ourselves facing times of personal trial and tribulation, rather than begin to feel sorry for ourselves, we must learn to see the Lord's Spirit moving and working in our lives. In my article "Are Personal

Tragedies Due to Sin?", I point out that sometimes the Lord allows these things to happen to simply test our faith, and to strengthen us, so that we will become better soldiers for Him. Consider the words of the Prophet Jeremiah:

"If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?"

Jeremiah 12:5, KJV

Thus, with each victory we gain, we become tougher soldiers for the Lord, who He can then place us in even hotter and more difficult battles. The Apostle Paul spoke of this very same thing when we wrote the following in his second Epistle to his beloved son in the faith, Timothy:

"Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ."

2 Timothy 2:3, KJV

In other instances, such as in the case of diseases and various bodily afflictions, they might serve to glorify the Lord through a miraculous healing which will be a testimony to many, and thus result in many souls being saved. Consider the following incident which is found in the Gospel of John:

"And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him."

John 9:2-3, KJV

There is yet another reason for certain trials which manifest themselves through conflicts within our families. While it may be difficult for some people to accept, in certain cases, the Lord uses these fiery trials to free us from persons or situations which are harmful to us, and which are hindering us from fully serving Him as we would like to do. As I point out in my four-part series "Civil Disobedience and Christian Persecution", as well as in some of my other articles which deal with the topic of Christian discipleship, the Lord will not hesitate to divide a family if one or several of the members are serious about serving Him, while the others are resisting it. As Jesus said, He came not to bring peace, but

a sword. I personally experienced this in my own family a number of decades ago; and to this day, I continue to meet rejection because of the decision I made back then. While this is a radical doctrine, it is nevertheless Scripturally sound. Consider the following verses which are found in the Gospel of Matthew:

"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."

Matthew 10:34-39, KJV

"But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."

Matthew 12:48-50, KJV

Of course, sometimes our trials are also meant to purge us of erroneous ideas, personal bad habits or sins of the heart with which the Lord is not pleased, in order to make of us better vessels for the Master's use. It is up to each one of us to discover exactly why the Lord is allowing these things to happen at this particular time in our lives. No one can do this for us. We alone must be desperate enough to find out for ourselves. If the Lord does reveal to us that it is a chastisement, then we must view His dealing with us as an act of Divine Love which will hopefully bring forth positive fruit in our lives. That is, if we yield to His Spirit and learn the lesson He is trying to teach us. As with punishing our own children, this process is not always easy, for as the Apostle Paul wrote:

"Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable

fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."

Hebrews 12:11, KJV

When the Lord's heavy Hand is upon us, we must not harden our hearts. Rather, we must repent of our sin, and cry out to Him in desperation for His forgiveness. We must ask Him to give us the necessary grace, faith and strength in order to make the change He desires. Psalm Fifty-One is one of my favorite Psalms because it is the desperate cry of a man who knew he had seriously sinned before the Lord. Consider what King David wrote during his time of need:

"Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me."

Psalms 51:10, KJV

Like King David of old, we must readily recognize that we cannot possibly obtain the victory of our own accord. We cannot obtain the victory by looking inward, but only by looking upward. This is the central theme of my article "The Gospel of Thomas: Introspection or Heaven-Spection?". We must not look to human strength or wisdom, but only to the Spirit of the living God, as we see by the following verse:

". . . Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts."

Zechariah 4:6, KJV

There is only one person who can give us the victory which we so desperately want and need, and that is the man Christ Jesus. He alone is the Author and the Finisher of our faith, and the Captain of our Salvation. Consider the following wonderful verses:

". . . I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth."

Psalms 121:1-2, KJV

"But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

1 Corinthians 15:57, KJV

"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Hebrews 12:2, KJV

"For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."

Hebrews 2:10, KJV

Just as Jesus was made perfect through His sufferings, we too can partake more of the Divine Nature, if we will but yield ourselves to the Lord, and learn the lessons He is trying to teach us. As long as we are trying to work in our own strength and by our own power, He will never be able to shine through us as He would like to. However, if we desperately seek the Lord's face during our times of trial and personal tribulation, He will indeed look down from Heaven and hear our cries. After all, His mercy truly endures forever, and is renewed every morning, as becomes clear by the following verses:

"Have mercy upon me, O LORD; consider my trouble which I suffer of them that hate me, thou that liftest me up from the gates of death:"

Psalms 9:13, KJV

"It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness."

Lamentations 3:22-23, KJV

If you are interested in seeing exactly how much King David believed in the mercy of the Lord, I encourage you to read Psalm 136 in its entirety. In all twenty-six verses of the Psalm, David states that the mercy of the Lord endureth forever. If we do seek the Lord with our whole hearts and repent of our sins, not only will He pull us out of the mire into which we have sunk, but He will lift us up and set us upon a rock so that we shall never be moved. David also mentioned this fact in many of his Psalms. Consider the following examples:

"Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation: and

thy right hand hath holden me up, and thy gentleness hath made me great . . . He delivereth me from mine enemies: yea, thou liftest me up above those that rise up against me: thou hast delivered me from the violent man."

Psalms 18:35, 48, KJV

"For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock . . . When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up."

Psalms 27:5, 10, KJV

". . . I will extol thee, O LORD; for thou hast lifted me up, and hast not made my foes to rejoice over me."

Psalms 30:1, KJV

"I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy: for thou hast considered my trouble; thou hast known my soul in adversities; And hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy: thou hast set my feet in a large room. Have mercy upon me, O LORD, for I am in trouble: mine eye is consumed with grief, yea, my soul and my belly."

Psalms 31:7-9, KJV

". . . I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD."

Psalms 40:1-3, KJV

"Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me. But thou, O LORD, be merciful unto me, and raise me up, that I may requite them. By this I know that thou favourest me, because mine enemy doth not triumph over me. And as for me, thou upholdest me in mine integrity, and settest me before thy face for ever."

Psalms 41:9-12, KJV

"But I am poor and sorrowful: let thy salvation, O God, set me up on high. I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving."

Psalms 69:29-30, KJV

"Unless the LORD had been my help, my soul had almost dwelt in silence. When I said, My foot slippeth; thy mercy, O LORD, held me up."

Psalms 94:17-18, KJV

"Uphold me according unto thy word, that I may live: and let me not be ashamed of my hope. Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe: and I will have respect unto thy statutes continually."

Psalms 119:116-117, KJV

So as we can see, the Lord truly has the Power to lift us up above all of our trials and tribulations, if we will only let Him. We cannot depend upon our own human strength and natural reasoning to find our way out of these things. Our own attempts will only lead to further confusion and utter despair. We must learn to trust wholly in the Lord and cast our burdens upon Him, instead of trying to carry them around ourselves. The Scriptures are quite clear regarding this issue. Consider the following verses:

"Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved."

Psalms 55:22, KJV

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Matthew 11:28-30, KJV

"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you."

1 Peter 5:7, KJV

Regardless of what your personal situation might be right now; no matter how bad it might appear to you at the moment; even if there doesn't seem to be a way out at the present; trust in Him with your whole heart, and do not lean to your own human understanding or wisdom. Trust Him that He has His Hand on your life, and that He knows exactly what He is doing, even if you don't. This requires real faith of gold. As His child, He is not going to allow anything to happen to you that is not for your own good. You must truly believe

that all things really do work together for good to those who love Him. Consider the following group of verses:

"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

Proverbs 3:5-6, KJV

"And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left."

Isaiah 30:21, KJV

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

Isaiah 55:8-9, KJV

"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, KJV

If you are not sure of what to do at the moment, then just don't do anything, because you might end up making matters worse if you proceed ahead without Him. Just let go of your fears and let the Lord have His way. If you truly love Him and trust in Him, He will not let you fall. He will be there to catch you and to lift you up. No matter how dark it may appear right now, no matter how scared you may feel, you must not doubt that God loves you, and that He will NEVER leave you nor forsake you, because you are His child for whom He died. As I note in my article "Are We Once Saved, Always Saved?", once you have come to Jesus, you are His forever, and nothing will ever change that. He promised that in His Word. You cannot be too bad for Jesus, only too good. Once again, consider the following verses which verify these points:

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

John 6:37, KJV

"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never

perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

John 10:28, KJV

". . . for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

Hebrews 13:5, KJV

"If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself."

2 Timothy 2:13, KJV

If you need more verses to strengthen your faith in your Salvation, then I highly encourage you to read and memorize the verses which are found in my article entitled "A Verse a Day to Keep the Doubts Away!". It is at times like these when we are facing great difficulties in our lives, that Satan just loves to come in full-force in order to condemn us, and to fill us with his doubts. But don't you believe him for a minute! He is a liar and the father of lies! There is no truth in him, so don't you dare let him devour you, or poke you with his fiery darts. Consider these two verses:

". . . He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."

John 8:44, KJV

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:"

1 Peter 5:8, KJV

When that ole dragon tells you that you are not the Lord's child, or that you are not saved, or that you have committed such a horrible sin that the Lord couldn't possibly forgive you this time or love you anymore, you just turn around and quote him the Word! Do it out loud if you have to! That is precisely what Jesus did in the fourth chapter of the Gospel of Matthew. When Satan slyly stated "If . . . if . . . if" three times, Jesus turned around and said "It is written, it is written, it is written" four times! Just put up your shield of faith, and let his fiery arrows bounce right off of it! That shield of faith is the result of constantly reading and memorizing God's Word, as we see by these verses:

"Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked."

Ephesians 6:16, KJV

"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

Romans 10:17, KJV

While it may be hard for you to see or understand at the moment, one of these days you are going to be able to look back at this situation. At that moment, it will suddenly become clear to you, and you will finally come to see how the Lord was working in your life all along to bring about His perfect Will.

We are the exact same way with our children. While those trials they suffer at school sometimes seem like hard things to them, and obstacles which they feel they will never be able to overcome, as their parents, we know that it just isn't so, don't we? While it pains us to see our children suffer, we know that they are going to make it through okay. Thus, we encourage them, and we tell them not to worry. We tell them that everything is going to be okay, because we know that it will be; even if they can't see it at the moment. How much more then is our Heavenly Father going to take care of us, His precious children? Remember again Jesus' own words as found in the Gospel of Luke:

"Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows."

Luke 12:6-7, KJV

In conclusion, God loves you! He cares for you! He will not let you fall for very long! He will pick you up and lift you up! You must believe this! There is light at the end of the dark tunnel; but you will never see it if you sit down and quit. You must hold on to your Father's Hand, and let Him lead the way, instead of groping through the darkness on your own, trying to find your own way out. He has a wonderful victory waiting for you, if you will just trust utterly in Him alone.

With these thoughts I will bring this article to a close. I trust that you have enjoyed it, learned something from it, and I pray that it has been a blessing in your life. If you have an account with Facebook, Twitter, Google+, Tumblr, or with any other social network, I would really appreciate if you would take the time to click or tap on the corresponding link that is found on this page. Thank you so very much! May God bless you abundantly!

For additional information, you may want to refer to the list of reading resources below which were also mentioned in this article, or which contain topics which are related to this article. All of these articles are likewise located on the Bill's Bible Basics website:

A Verse a Day to Keep the Doubts Away!

Are Personal Tragedies Due to Sin?

Are We Once Saved, Always Saved?

Beholding the Evil and the Good

Civil Disobedience and Christian Persecution

Love, Mercy, Forgiveness and Chastisement

The Battle is Not Yours Alone!

The Gospel of Thomas: Introspection or Heaven-Spection?

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