

How God Steps Into a Messy Life

A lot of people have told me lately that I'm too hard on myself. That I refer to myself as a mess way too much.

I believe them.

The problem is that I feel like a mess. I feel like I just can't get my life together—any part of it. I told a friend recently that I feel like a spinning top—all wobbly and going in circles. See, that's not positive either. Honest, but not positive.

My friend replied that I'm not a spinning top. I just have a lot of spinning plates, and some of them are wobbly. I think they are *all* wobbly, but that's just me.

The problem is that my life is messy. Maybe *I'm* not the mess; maybe it's my life. And I've never been partial to playing in the mud.

I believe I'm kind of in the muck right now. It's a rather yucky place to be. I'm not very fond of it. Muck reminds me of some verses:

"I waited patiently for the Lord; he inclined to me and heard my cry. He drew me up from the pit of destruction, out of the miry bog, and set my feet upon the rock, making my steps secure. He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God. Many will see and fear and put their trust in the Lord" (Ps. 40:1-3).

Do you know what a miry bog is? It's like a muddy swamp. When I think of a swamp, I think of a slimy, smelly, wet place. (Actually, it also makes me think of Scooby-Doo—the swamp monster or beast or whatever it was called. There are days

when I think I might be the swamp monster!) A miry bog is a place where our feet get trapped in mud, where we can sink down and get stuck.

Right now, miry bog feels about right. I'm feeling rather swampy, although I don't believe I'm slimy or smelly or wet. Just a bit ... *ugh*. A bit down and stuck.

It's a difficult place for me. I thought I was done with down. I did the down and stuck thing when my husband left. I don't want to do it again.

So in the midst of my swamp, what am I to do?

Psalm 40 says I'm to wait patiently for the Lord. At least, that's what the psalmist did. I can do that ... I think. I mean, honestly, my feet are kinda stuck here. My heart is sinking. And my mind is definitely muddy. Stuck feet ... sinking heart ... muddy mind. Oh dear.

The cool thing about reading a whole passage of Scripture—not a verse or two—is that you often get a very beautiful thing. A lovely present from God. I decided to read all of Psalm 40, and how very glad I am that I did. God showed me that this psalmist is speaking my heart.

The psalm begins with a remembrance of God's deliverance and a time of praising God for all He has done—for His continued faithfulness and provision. The psalmist also reminds God that he has been faithful to share all the wonderful things God has done:

"I have told the glad news of deliverance in the great congregation; behold, I have not restrained my lips, as you know, O Lord. I have not hidden your deliverance within my heart; I have spoken of your faithfulness and your salvation; I have not concealed your steadfast love and your faithfulness from the great congregation" (vv. 9-10).

The next part of the passage is the psalmist asking again for God's deliverance. He's facing new trials:

"For evils have encompassed me beyond number; my iniquities have overtaken me, and I cannot see; they are more than the hairs of my head; my heart fails me. Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me! O Lord, make haste to help me!" (vv. 12-13).

That's how I'm feeling right now. When my husband left and divorce became a reality and single parenting became my life, God faithfully inclined His ear to me and heard my cry. He delivered me. He gave me a song of praise to share.

But now things are all wonky again and I need some serious rescuing—again.

And, like the psalmist, I believe and trust that God is going to deliver me. I even on some level have an excitement about what God is going to do. I just know that He is going to do something grand in my life. Even if it isn't grand by the world's standards, it will be a blessing by mine.

"As for me, I am poor and needy, but the Lord takes thought for me. You are my help and my deliverer; do not delay, O my God!" (v. 17).

How often have I wanted to say, "Do not delay God! Please work quickly!" I know that God's timing is always perfect. Maybe I should say that it always results in the perfect thing, but His timing definitely does *not* feel perfect sometimes. Sometimes perfect to me means *right now*. Who am I kidding? Not sometimes—*all the time!*

But I trust Him. I know Him to be faithful, and I know that He will always and only do what is the very best thing for me and mine.

"As for you, O Lord, you will not restrain your mercy from me; your steadfast love and your faithfulness will ever preserve

me!" (v. 11).

He's taking me to a deeper understanding of His love for me. It's a glorious thing, but oh, I have so much to work through in my own heart so that I can receive all that He has in store for me.

Thankfully He does not leave me to work alone. He is totally in charge of the work and the worksite! I'm excited to see what He does and where He takes me in His Word and in my life.

God is teaching me so much about Himself and myself. I can't wait to share. I just want to get my thoughts in order and make sure that what I share blesses you.

Praying that you will seek God, be glad in Him and continually say, "Great is the Lord!"

"But may all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you; may those who love your salvation say continually, "Great is the Lord!" (v. 16).

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