

Run to This Relief When You Feel Like You're Drowning

If someone gave you a million dollars, what would you do with it?

I posed this question to several friends and family members, and their answers included things like “pay off all my bills” (actually, this one was the one most often mentioned), donate to worthy organizations, buy a new car, take a vacation and set aside money for kids’ college expenses.

Some of those options sound pretty great to me. I bet you’d be thrilled to be able to choose some of them, too.

Now keep all this in mind as you imagine yourself in another scenario: You’re in deep financial debt. You struggle to make the monthly payments on your debt at the same time as you worry about whether the electric company’s going to cut you off. You’ve become a master at knowing which bills must be covered and which can go unpaid, at least for this month. There’s certainly no money for extras like eating out; in fact, sometimes there isn’t enough money to buy groceries. Seeing a doctor when you’re sick is now a luxury because you can’t afford the co-payment. Your husband tells you his company is considering layoffs in his division, and your day-care provider (the only affordable one you could find) decides to get out of the day-care business and go back to school. And then your car breaks down, and the mechanic tells you it’ll cost \$1,200 to fix it.

How much stress would you be under?

How desperate would you be for relief?

Pretty desperate, I imagine. Anyone in that situation would probably spend a lot of time crying out to God. *God, do*

something! God, I'm drowning!

God, help!

Now let me ask you a question: What kind of relief would we be crying out to God for? Or maybe a better question would be, how much relief would we ask for?

Most of us probably wouldn't raise our eyes much beyond the present circumstances. We'd beg God for financial assistance, but even then, we probably wouldn't be expecting much. A couple thousand dollars would make us tearfully grateful. If God were to completely lift our financial burden by giving us the money to pay off all our debts and restore our balance to \$0, we'd be ecstatic beyond words. And if He gave us a million dollars to enjoy on top of that? Riches beyond our comprehension.

Realistically speaking, however, God is probably not going to give you or me a million dollars, free and clear (wouldn't that be nice?).

But that's okay. Because what He does intend to do is far better.

We moms suffer in many different ways. We suffer as a result of guilt, difficult relationships or heartbreaking losses. And when we suffer, we cry out to God. We plead for Him to take away our pain, or at least lessen it so that we're not drowning emotionally.

Now let me share with you one of the most beautiful things I've ever realized: God intends not only to heal our pain (as if that weren't amazing enough), but to bring us to a place where we can experience His riches in ways we've only dreamed about.

In other words, He has more in mind for us than pain relief.

Much more.

God's healing grace not only lessens our pain, but also grants us the ability to enjoy the warmth of a gentle sun on our face or delight in the sights, sounds, and smells of a major-league baseball game. He heals us not merely so that we can be free from distress, but so that we can be free to exult in the pleasures of His creation.

His healing not only relieves our suffering but also grants us the ability to let offenses go when we know they don't really matter or to be at peace even when someone mistreats us. We become not only free from pain, but free to be who we were made to be.

His healing does far more than mitigate tragedy; it enables us to receive blessings we've never experienced or that we never thought we'd experience again.

God's healing is way more amazing than most of us have ever realized.

So yes, when your soul is in agony, cry out to God to heal your pain. Yes, keep on beseeching Him until relief comes, and then, when it does, rejoice in His deliverance. But don't forget to look for the blessings He has prepared for you.

They're worth far more to your soul than a million bucks.

"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits, who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies, who satisfies you mouth with good things, so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's " (Ps. 103:2-5). {eoa}

*Adapted with permission from Manna for Moms by **Megan Breedlove**. Megan is the author of Well Done, Good and Faithful Mommy and Manna for Moms: God's Provision for Your Hair-Raising, Miracle-Filled Mothering Adventure (Regal Books.) She is also a blogger and a stay-at-home mom with five children.*