

The Surest Way to Cope When You Go Through Devastating Loss

Last Fall, Janice and I took a two-week trip to New England to enjoy the beautiful fall foliage. We saw some wonderful sites and had some great experiences as we traveled through 13 states and covered 3000 miles from South Carolina to Maine, and back. Along the way we had the good fortune of visiting with a graduate of Janice's professional coach training program and one of this ministries Faith and Health Ambassadors.

One site that we especially enjoyed visiting was the Bennington Battle Monument in Bennington, Vermont. It's the tallest structure in Vermont and commemorates the Battle of Bennington, a battle that lead to the turning point in the Revolutionary War. We were able to ride an elevator to the top of the monument for a panoramic view of the valleys and rolling hills of Vermont, Massachusetts and New York.

I was particularly struck by the stone that the monument was made with and how the tower was constructed. As I stood inside the base of the monument, and read about its construction and the significance of the placement of its cornerstone, I made some parallels to our Christian faith.

The Bennington Battle Monument is 306 feet 4 and 1/2 inches tall. (It's about half the height of the Washington Monument in DC which is 555 feet.) The cornerstone was laid in 1887, and the monument was completed and dedicated in 1891.

The walls of the foundation were built to a thickness of nine feet. The cornerstone itself is seven feet long, more than two feet thick, and it estimated to weigh five tons. A copper box set under the stone contains documents and memorabilia. The

stone used for the exterior is Sandy Hill dolomite, a blue-gray magnesian limestone that was queried from near Hudson Falls, New York. This stone was chosen because it's known to be resistant to the effects of withering, abrasion and crackling. It's the same type of stone that was used to build a portion of the Brooklyn Bridge.

So how might all this tie in to our spiritual lives?

The size, weight, placement and type of the cornerstone of this monument—and its significance as to how it sturdies this tall structure—has its parallels to our faith.

The cornerstone of this massive structure serves to 'anchor' the monument. All the stones that were added after the cornerstone hinged upon the placement of the first stone that was laid. This cornerstone was the first of many other stones that serve as the foundation upon which the entire monument rests.

The Bible has many references to a cornerstone and it's most often used as a name for Jesus.

Therefore, thus says the Lord God: See, I lay in Zion a stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, firmly placed; he who believes shall not act hastily (Isa. 28:16).

Peter refers to the above Isaiah verse when he writes in 1 Peter 2:6:

"For also it is contained in the Scripture, 'Look! I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious, and he who believes in Him shall never be put to shame.'"

Peter reminds us that Jesus is the cornerstone for all believers. If we trust in him as our Savior, we will not be shamed.

Jesus is our strength to make it through stressful times. He can provide peace when nothing else can. It is through His death on the cross that we are forgiven from our sins and that we can have a relationship with His Father in heaven, God.

The apostle Paul writes:

“According to the grace of God which has been given to me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, but another builds on it. Now let each one take heed how he builds on it. For no one can lay another foundation than that which was laid, which is Jesus Christ” 1 Cor. 3:10-11).

Paul is reminding us that the true foundation of the Christian church is Jesus Christ, and that all those in ministry should be teaching others about Him and His ways and His truths.

So, what or who is the foundation of your life? Who is your cornerstone? Who do you turn to when your life is crumbling around you? How do you cope in times of disaster or the loss of a loved one? What or who do you turn to when you attempt to make a significant behavior change in your life?

I pray that you know Jesus and that He is the foundation of your life, your Cornerstone.

Jesus himself encourages us:

“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavily burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me. For I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light” (Matt. 11:28-30).

If you don't know Jesus and are therefore not able to turn to Him when your life is out of control, I encourage you to get

to know Jesus.

Or, contact me through the website, or in a return email, and I'd be more than happy to introduce Him to you. {eo}

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