

When Your World Is Upside Down

The past few weeks have been stressful for me.

The kids and I started back homeschooling after Christmas break. There were some pretty significant, ongoing issues relating to our oldest son and his disability that we had to struggle to deal with. A friend's son attempted to commit suicide, and a few days later, he died in the hospital. Then, my stepfather died suddenly from a heart attack. The seven of us traveled to Missouri for a few days to attend his funeral. While there, and even afterwards, I had to deal with issues relating to my extended family and my mom. The morning after we arrived home, the kids and I took off for San Antonio, where we had reservations we couldn't have rescheduled without losing a few hundred dollars. A couple days later, Phil and I found out we need a new air conditioning system for the house (a must in Texas). Depending on the expense, getting a new air conditioning system may wipe out our savings. A couple days after that, I held Jessica's birthday party for her friends. Tomorrow, our homeschool co-op gets back in session, and I will be teaching in two classes and assisting in two others. And all this is in the midst of other personal, family and relationship issues, some of which are deeply painful.

My head is spinning. I feel like I don't know which way is up.

Or maybe a better way to put it is that I feel like I'm participating in one of the tests I had to take during the lifeguard certification process back in the day, where we had to jump into the pool, dive to the bottom, pick up a 10-pound, brick-shaped weight, then swim to the surface and tread water for one minute while holding the weight out of the water with both hands.

Life is hard right now.

But the prayers of others have made a difference. In fact, they have kept my head above water while I held the brick and treaded like mad with my legs.

I truly believe, because I have experienced it, that prayer can make a difference in the lives of others. Prayer is not just something we offer because we don't have anything "better" or "more" to give. Prayer is extremely valuable. It's not the least we can do, but the most.

Scripture makes it clear that God hears our prayers, is moved by them and acts in response to them. So when people pray for me, they are asking Almighty God to exercise His power on my behalf. And we know that God grants all prayers that are righteous if they're in accordance with His will.

Thus, the comfort others ask for me to receive adds to the comfort I've requested, and I'm able to keep treading water, despite the weight I carry in my hands.

So when the hits just keep on comin', ask people to pray. By all means, ask them for practical things, too, and accept offers of help. But above all, ask for their heartfelt and continued prayers.

Because those prayers touch the heart of God for you. And there is nothing more valuable that someone can do for you than entreat God to act.

James 5:16—"The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man accomplishes much."

*Adapted from **Megan Breedlove's** blog, *Manna for Moms*. 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 stay-at-home mom with five children.*