

Where Is God in Your Darkest Season?

When you're in the middle of what feels like a debilitating trial, it's easy to think that God favors others more than you, or that the situation that you are going through is somehow beyond God's ability to fix it. I know these feelings all too well ...

In the midst of the darkest time of my life, I went to see a professional counselor who is a friend of mine. Of course, the first question he asked was, "Why have you come to see me?" I shared the story of my family crisis and my daughter's nervous breakdown. I went on to explain how discouraged and depressed I was over these situations.

He asked me again, "So, what's the problem?"

"I told you," I snapped back, "I'm discouraged and depressed." He proceeded to ask me the same question again. Finally, I asked in a very frustrated voice, "What's your point?"

"Well, the Bible says that love suffers long," he answered. "You are suffering because people that you love are suffering. Jesus said that we are to mourn with those who mourn. You're in mourning because your family is suffering. You're responding the way that Jesus taught us to respond. When this is over, you will get to rejoice with those who rejoice. Until then, trust God with your family, and know that this season will end in time."

Three years later our family crisis was over; our son and daughter were in a great place and we spent the new season rejoicing with our family who had been restored.

Refuse to Lose Hope

One of my great heroes in life is Abraham Lincoln. He was a master at holding on to hope and never giving up. His list of failures goes something like this: Defeated for state legislature, failed in business, sweetheart died, had a nervous breakdown, defeated for Speaker, defeated for nomination for Congress, lost re-nomination, rejected for a land officer, defeated for U.S. Senate, defeated for nomination for vice president, again defeated for U.S. Senate and finally, elected president. Talk about a guy who knew how to get up when life knocked him down. Lincoln just refused to lose hope.

Proverbs 29:18a says: "Where there is no vision, the people perish." There is so much truth held inside of these eight words. Hopelessness is a dream killer. Without hope, you can't have faith, and without faith, the world is a miserable place to live.

No Situation Is Impossible with God

We can see the power of God's redemption in even the darkest, daunting and difficult situations. The truth is that when all seemed hopeless for Daniel in the lion's den, God saved him. When Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were thrown into the fiery furnace, Jesus himself set them free. When God found a man so bound with hatred that he was murdering Christians, Jesus encountered him on the road to Damascus and changed his name to Paul, transforming him into one of the greatest heroes of faith to have ever graced this planet.

The stories go on and on of God's amazing ability to redeem any situation or save any person. There is no hand that can be dealt to you with which God is unable to win. There is nothing impossible for God. Whatever is happening in your life, remember this: Jesus is a master of making palaces out of pitfalls. It doesn't matter how far you have fallen or how big a mess you've made out of your life, He "is able to do exceedingly and abundantly beyond all that we ask or imagine"

(Eph. 3:20a). God specializes in the impossible! If you are mourning now you will one day reap in joy (Ps. 126:5).

God's Love Suffers Long

I want to end by reminding you that no matter what mountain you may be facing today, God's love suffers long through it all. The love of Jesus has length; it goes the distance. You can't fall so far that it can't catch you, run so fast that it can't get you or hide so well that it can't find you. His love is better than your worst day, stronger than the most defiant will and more forgiving than your cruelest sin. When you give up, love goes on, and when you fall down, it picks you up. Love is courage to the fearful, hope to the helpless, strength to the weary and wealth to the impoverished. Love goes the distance. {eoa}

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