

Why Trust God When Life Hurts

Stephen was stoned to death. He trusted in God completely, even as he was being falsely accused, he trusted in God and he still lost his life.

My husband preached about Stephen a few Sundays ago and I've been thinking about our own family, our own trials, our own suffering, how certain areas of disability impact us and how often I cry out to God to help me, to help our family.

"Trusting in God in the midst of trial does not mean everything will work out. It means that by trusting we have peace, even if the worst-case scenario happens. Trust in the midst of trial is a result of a Spirit-filled life." –Andy Stumbo

And here is a confession, so often I cry out to God in despair because I want Him to fix things! I cry out to Him because I don't want the worst case scenario, I don't want the hard, I don't want the messy. I want the peace, oh I want the peace, but I want the peace to come because then everything is OK, like, really OK.

But it's not.

My middle daughter is 8 years old, she has cerebral palsy and is going through a really hard time emotionally. She also has trauma and attachment issues, as well as anxiety and depression. We adopted her from Ukraine when she was almost 4 years old. Parenting a child from a hard place is the hardest thing I've ever had to do.

The last two months have wrecked me. I'm incredibly thankful for her pediatrician and her therapists, who saw us a little more than once a week and talked to me on the phone sometimes several times a week. The therapists that are brave enough to

say, "Ellen, you need to do neurofeedback too, you need a counselor to help you process all the hurt that you're experiencing."

And we have wonderful friends that have been praying for our family. Oh we are so thankful for the prayers!

So I want things to get better. I want to say, "Everything is supposed to be getting better. She's supposed to allow the love of a family to heal her heart, to feel God's love through us and allow that love to undo all the damage caused by the trauma and pain and loss she experienced those first four years of her life. She's supposed to not let her physical limitations get her down because she knows we are her biggest cheerleaders and we got her back. She's supposed to leave that behind her and we all move on!"

After two months of intense intervention, trying different medications, getting extra time with her therapists, and surviving the Christmas season (which was hard!) we are at a better place because of the help we have. But I look back at the last two months and feel terrified to be there again, to be there when she's a pre-teen, or when she's a teenager. Terrified that once more she will feel so hopeless, that I feel so hopeless.

But life is messy. So messy.

And what if we end up here again. What about *when* we end up here again.

I want to trust God, but I want it to mean this is all behind us. However, God never promised to take our problems away. He did not promise prosperity and blissful joy. He promised trials, because life is messy,

"I have told you these things so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But be of good cheer. I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).

That is not what trusting in God means, and I needed to hear that as my husband preached:

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So we can make a plan for emergency situations. We’ve talked to her pediatrician and therapists about what it would look like if we have to take her to an inpatient facility. We have people helping us invest in our marriage too so that we can be stronger when these challenges come our way.

We need peace.

Not peace that everything will be OK, but peace that surpasses all understanding. The peace that only comes when life feels like it is falling apart, yet you know to whom you belong, and you know He’s with you till the end.

“Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27).

Yes, a peace this world cannot offer, because it is a peace that is not dependent on circumstances, on whether our life is going well or falling apart. And that is exactly the peace I want, the peace I need.

I don’t know what your messy looks like, but may you find God’s peace in the midst of life.

*Adapted from **Ellen Stumbo’s** blog at . Ellen is a pastor’s wife and she writes about finding beauty in brokenness with gritty honesty and openness. She is passionate about sharing the real—sometimes beautiful and sometimes ugly—aspects of faith,*

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