

Why You Can Say Thank You to Your Future Backstabber

I do not know who you are. You are out there, somewhere, watching and waiting. You could be deliberately planning your attack, or perhaps you are entirely unaware of what you are about to do. You might be a close friend. A family member. A co-worker. You may even be a church member. I really have no way of knowing. I am at the disadvantage. Most likely right now I trust you, talk to you and fellowship with you. However, the time of my betrayal is drawing near. I cannot see its approach or that it will be by your hand. I do not know who you are. Yet.

I wonder, what will be the circumstances of my life when you betray me? Will I be at my lowest point? Will I be in my most desperate state? Will I be looking to you for camaraderie and support? Even now, I contemplate, who has gathered with you against me? Do I know some of them? Do I know all of them? What are the whispering rumors you have secretly embraced above our friendship? I do not yet know. But in time, I will.

Deep down, I know this betrayal will result in a stronger me, a braver me, a more courageous soldier. I have witnessed this before, not just in my own life, but also in the lives of countless others. I believe the promise that God causes all things to work together for the good of those who love Him and are called according to His purpose (Rom. 8:28). In my heart of hearts, though, I never thought it could be, or would be, you.

I must now therefore prepare to draw comfort from the experience of David, the great psalmist, whose mighty life was marked by betrayal:

*For it is not an enemy who reproaches me;
then I could bear it.
Nor is it one who hates me who has exalted himself against
me;
then I could hide from him.
But it was you, my peer,
my guide, and my acquaintance.
We took pleasant counsel together,
and walked to the house of God in company (Ps. 55:12-14).*

Betrayal is the action of a false friend whose words are smooth but whose heart is filled with treachery. How long have you known you were a false friend? When did you launch your war against me in your heart? When did your role model become Judas rather than John? Have you forgotten that Judas betrayed Jesus with a kiss? Only an enemy will, when the opportune time arises, show themselves as such. When did you weaponize your words so that, as swords drawn from the scabbards, they could so effortlessly stab into the heart? It is beyond comprehension to think your pleasant and soothing words—words expressive of friendship and love—were actually words of deception. My mind cannot fathom how our relationship became the gallows of my betrayal with your very hands fashioning the noose.

Do you know betrayal among the brethren drives the betrayed into a wilderness (Ps. 55:7)? Do you not comprehend betrayal among the children of God is what breeds violence and strife in our cities (Ps. 55:9)? Do you understand the betrayal of someone who loves you is a violation of God's covenant (Ps. 55:20)? Dear future betrayer, have you grasped the enormous reality that betrayal shortens your lifespan by half of your days (Ps. 55:23)?

Through my betrayal, however, I know I will become a stronger Christian. I have God's promise that He will hear me when I call and protect my soul with peace in the midst of the battle

and those who strive against me (Ps. 55:18). It is an awkward concept that you, my future betrayer, are essential to my life. You are the modern-day embodiment of Joseph's brethren, who, in their fit of jealousy and rage, rose up against a dreamer who was simply checking the welfare of his father's flocks. When Joseph set out with a dream in his heart, little did he know the day would end with him in a pit, deposited there by jealousy and strife. It is with that same innocence I go forth, ready and able to receive whatever it is you are preparing to bring against my life.

You should know my coming promotion is now ordained and will be directly proportional to the level of your betrayal. Even as an eagle rises against the forces of the wind and the caterpillar breaks through the coffin of its cocoon, so I also will rise and break forth. It is a benefit of the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:2).

Clearly, your betrayal will bring me much pain and grief, and I take no delight in that realization. I will, however, as James admonished, count it all joy when I face this trial of your betrayal. Dear Betrayer, what you are actually doing is testing my faith, and that test will produce endurance in my life, an endurance that will result in my completeness. I will then lack nothing that is needed for victorious living (James 1:2-4).

Now, in closing and in advance, let me take the time to thank you, my future betrayer. Thank you for helping to make me stronger. Thank you for providing the wind upon which I rise and the steps upon which I climb. Thank you for paving the path to promotion. Your predecessors played crucial roles in forging Joseph, David and Jesus into the leaders they ultimately became, and you, undoubtedly, will do the same for me. Betrayers do not destroy destinies; they unveil destinies, and, in an amazing way, take their place amongst the "all things" of life (Rom. 8:28). I now stand steadied and my heart is prepared for your betrayal. The Lord will sustain me,

for He will never allow the righteous to be moved (Ps. 55:22).

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