

Hold On To Your Faith

Last fall, in spite of our prayers, Central Florida residents faced the possibility of going through a second hurricane. Every weather report we saw indicated that one was heading our way. My husband and I had already been through a first round and experienced some damage to our home. Surely, it couldn't happen again!

When Frances, the second storm, arrived, my family was out of town. I kept praying and declaring to myself that no matter what I found after I got back, God said it was all going to work out for my good (see Rom. 8:28).

It was easy to have faith—until I walked into the house and found the ceilings collapsed, water standing everywhere and the smell of mold permeating the air. How could this disaster turn out for our good?

The Bible gives us many examples of men and women who loved God but who had to walk through difficult times. Jesus warned us that we would experience trouble in this life (see John 16:33).

Sometimes our crises are brought on by our own actions, as Peter's crisis was when he denied Christ. Seeing his own failure, Peter wanted to abandon the life of faith and return to something he knew he could handle. Jesus had prayed that Peter's faith wouldn't fail and that after he was through the trial, he would be able to strengthen the other followers (see Luke 22:32), but Peter wanted to settle for fishing. In such cases, God has to show us our sin and purify our hearts, as Joy Dawson points out in her article, "Thank God for the Fire" (p. 22).

Other times we face difficulties that don't seem fair. We have to go through the war zones Carolyn Custis James refers to

(see p. 30). Whether it is a personal situation or a broader disaster that affects us, the difficulty can be overwhelming.

In such circumstances, you can believe that God's plan for you is good even when it doesn't appear to be so at first. After the hurricane, our home had a new roof, and several problem areas were fixed. Though I wouldn't have chosen this method to get the improvements, the house was better after the storm than before.

God knows the best path for us to take. In the process of walking through the war zones, we find out what is in us that must be dealt with and how much we need God. The more we get ourselves out of the way and let Him take over, the more we become what He designed us to be.

We also develop character and faith to walk at a higher level. God wants to conform us to the image of Jesus, who said He did nothing of Himself, but only what He saw His Father do (see John 5:19).

If you are in a war zone right now, don't let your faith fail. God is calling for those who know Him to do great exploits (see Dan. 11:32). Surrender to the process, and lay hold of your destiny!