

Christian Perspectives: keep your eye on the Lord

During difficult seasons it is often challenging to trust in God's unfailing love, isn't it?

I know for me, when challenges come in my life, I must remain focused or else I begin to lose faith and vision. I am sure that most of you can relate as to how dark it seems when we are being challenged by trials and tribulations in this life. Even more so when we sense the enemy of our soul has a hand in it. I love the story in the Bible, about King Jehoshaphat, in 2 Chronicles 20. Jehoshaphat saw his enemy and their intent, but even in his fear of what might happen, he fixed his eyes on the Lord. Dearly beloved brothers and sisters we are fully aware that our enemy seeks to steal, kill and destroy us, but we must remain focused and keep our eyes on the Lord.

King Jehoshaphat, was a ruler who believed in establishing a foundation of pure worship and godly morality; he made every attempt to include God in his decision making, in order to bring righteous judgments to his people and his nation. However, when the king and his nation were doing right in the Lord's sight, following his ways, honoring his laws and having a healthy fear of the Lord in their lives, the enemy came.

Like us, when we make a choice to do what is right, and do good in our lives and make a choice to follow the ways of the Lord and honor him, all hell breaks loose!

The enemy comes and tests our hearts! Tries to Steal our joy, peace, faith, love even our dreams and visions. He tries to get us back into bondage and strife. Sickness and death he sends for the final blow, to accomplish his goal.

But I am one who believes the enemy of our soul is on a leash, he can only hurt or cause havoc according to God's purpose and plan not his. I believe God uses the enemy to purify our hearts, to bring to the light that which is deep in our hearts that is not of God.

God is conforming us into the image of his Son Lord Jesus; this is a good thing.

As for the kingdom of Judah and King Jehoshaphat, God had them tested, were the people going to trust the things of this world, or were they going to put their faith in him alone, even in the face of death? Will we stand firm in the Lord when troubles come? Will we believe he will come through for us even when it seems hopeless and overwhelming?

Jehoshaphat and his people sought after the Lord, they cried out to him! He answered them! And so he will do for you in your time of need! He is no respecter of persons. What he has done for others he will do for you! Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever.

It is very important to note in verse 12 of 2 Chronicles 20 "O our God, will you not judge them? For we have no power against this great multitude that is coming against us; nor do we know what to do, but our eyes are upon you."

They first humbled themselves before the Lord, and got their hearts right with the Lord, they waited for him to direct them in what they should do! Then they let the Lord fight their battle, and did not try to do things in their own strength or the way they thought things should be done! They positioned themselves to stand still to see the salvation of the Lord.

Though the enemy was surrounding them, roaring like a lion, they kept their focus on the Lord not on the problems, trials, or tribulations that were all about them.

To top it off God has Jehoshaphat send his army out to fight the Ammonites and Moabites, which was an overwhelming enemy to Jehoshaphat and his people.

God also told Jehoshaphat to send out his singing priests to lead the army. Now is that crazy or what! God asks us to do strange things at times, but in our time of great need it is hard to do strange things that make no sense to our logic, it gets us frustrated it doesn't make sense, why do we have to go through all this?. But God knows best! Praise changed the atmosphere; worship drove the enemy crazy; so crazy they killed each other.

When we are in a time of great need it is time to make a stand, focus on the Lord, sing praises to him for what he has done: what he has done at the cross! Not on what he is going to do! He has done it already, just believe and see the salvation of the Lord.

After it was all said and done, Jehoshaphat and his people took three days to collect the spoil that was left from the enemy. What the enemy meant for evil, God meant for his good purpose. Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your understanding and in all your ways acknowledge him and he will direct your path.

When troubles come, yes it will come, do what I do: I focus on the Lord and sing that old hymn;

Turn your eyes upon Jesus look full in his wonderful face and things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of his glory and grace.

Blessings to you all. Pastor Gord Horsley, Abiding Place Ministries.