

I Samuel 30:6 "...but David encouraged himself in the Lord his God."

This Can't Be the Way!

(Psalm 56:3)

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If Christians will be honest with one another, they would admit that they have faced times, moments and had experiences that have made even the best of us question our faith. Even though we come to church and do more than warm the pews. Even though we live lives that demonstrate our love for the Christ who saved us and gave us eternal life. There are situations that happen when the weight seems capable of knocking us over, leaving us feeling as if a huge crater, the size of the Grand Canyon, has been carved out beneath us. Oh yes, even the "best saints" will ask the question, "is the prize worth the price?" "Is the battle really going to be won?" "Does joy come in the morning?" "Will my strength really be renewed?" "Do all things really work together for good?" "Does it pay to hold on?" "Is it worth it to keep on keeping on?"

Honest Christians will admit that they have felt pressured and like God had made an exit somewhere and left them all alone, abandoned in their distress, all hope gone. I can tell you, I've felt afraid to make another move. I've had times when I felt cut off at the pass, on a Monopoly board stopped at "Go", forbidden to pass, much less allowed to collect \$200.

Now don't jump on those who will admit they have had times when they were tempted to say "No" if you haven't been there - just keep living!

Moses wandered forty years through the wilderness not knowing where he was going. If that wasn't bad enough, he wandered with a bunch of people that didn't want to go anywhere, mad at him for taking them, and it was taking a long time without seeing their destination. Peter wandered away in tears after denying Jesus three times. Paul wandered from place to place being beaten for the name of Jesus. Oh yeah, if Oprah had interviewed these gentlemen their testimony at some point may have been "was it really worth the effort, the hassle, the struggle? Do I really have to put up with all of this?"

But let's get in your business. Are you wondering, "Do I really have to stay with this man or woman? Do I really have to keep working in this hell and put up with all the frustration on this job? Do I have to keep taking all this? How much longer do I have to say the same thing to that boy? I'm tired of talking until I'm blue in the face and I want to know is it worth it? Been there, done that. I'm tired of struggling all the time, banging my head upside the wall."

Again, let me admonish you, if you haven't been there, don't pass judgement on those that have! Just keep living. You'll be looking for a hiding place and there won't be anyplace to hide. I guarantee you there will come a moment in your living.

But let me share with you some things I've learned that will hopefully help you build and anchor your faith in Christ. My sister and brother, I pray that you come to the same conclusion as Peter in John 6:67-69, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God."

The study of David helps to make things clearer. We find in the early life of David that he was the shepherd destined to be a king. However, at this point in the study, he seems to be a long way from his destiny and the possibility of it happening seems almost remote. Somewhere in the back of his mind he was saying, "**This can't be the way!**"

We're blessed because we have the whole writing of David's life. But at the time of the writing of this text, David had no idea if he'd ever get to be king. The same can be said for us. We don't have any idea as to what great thing God has prepared, and is preparing us for and what we are going through right now is intended to stop us from getting where God wants us to be. At this point in time, we do not have any understanding of what the ***FULL*** story is going to be. Somebody in the future, our grandchildren, great-grandchildren, will know our whole stories. But right now, we're in the process of writing that story and satan is going to try his best to keep us from where God wants us. At this point in David's life, he is literally running for his life. At this point in your life, you could say, "I am running for my life."

The Dilemma

We see here that David's favor with King Saul was over and Saul was out to kill him. Saul had spies out all over the land looking for David and he wanted him dead. Saul used to be his best friend, now he was his worst enemy.

If it isn't clear, let me help you understand the metaphor. At one time you were on satan's side, an enemy of Christ. Now, a Christian on the Lord's side, having redemption through Christ's blood, having forgiveness of sins according to the riches of God's grace, you are an enemy of satan. God has declared that we are a peculiar people, ***a royal priesthood***, more than conquerors through Christ. Like David, we too have been anointed to be captain over our rich inheritance through Christ. As Samuel anointed David to be king with oil in 1 Samuel 10:1, we have been anointed with the precious Holy Spirit, the earnest of our inheritance, symbolizing God's presence and power in our lives. We too, like David, have our Saul who desires to steal, kill and destroy us. Satan wants us dead!

I'm not talking about a physical death. Only non-Christians fear death. For Christians, death holds no terror because Christ has conquered them all. For Christians, death is only the beginning of eternal life with God. I'm talking about "spiritual death". The type of death that John recorded in Revelations 3:1 concerning the church at Sardis. This church looked so good on the outside but was so corrupt on the inside. The church in Sardis was admonished to obey the Christian truth they had heard when they first believed in Christ, to get back to the **basics of the faith**.

David is now hiding out and on the run. Saul wants him dead and David has a rag-tagged army following along with him. All of those who were in distress, in debt, and discontented gathered themselves together around him and made David their leader – there were about 400 men following him. The familiar saying, “Misery loves company” could have been their slogan. Oftentimes when we are in trouble or feel we have been treated wrongly, we find ourselves surrounded with people in like misery!

Now at the time of the text, David has been hiding for some time in the land of the Philistine. David felt that the only place of safety was in the land of the Philistines. He felt that if he went there, Saul would soon tire of looking for him and he would escape a sure death at the hand of King Saul. King Achish has allowed him and his 600 men, with their families, to live there, to make his abode among the Philistines – it’s not the kind of life he wants, but David can’t go back home. His fellowship and friendship with King Saul’s son Jonathan is over. He’s got to act like he’s crazy so he can live in the land of the Philistines (1 Samuel 21:13-15). His name has been maligned and his family is in hiding. His fortune has been given away and it doesn’t look like he’s ever going to be king. Samuel anointed him to be king, but now he’s a fugitive! Some of us have been in this boat. We’ve sensed that God had a mighty plan for us. We’ve sensed that God wanted to bring us through. But it seems like just as we were ready to be blessed, it looked like a wall got in front of us - some of us couldn’t get over it, couldn’t get under it, and couldn’t get around it. Have you ever been there? Do you know that God wants to bless you, but so much hell is in your life that you feel that you can’t even drag yourself to the blessing?

David had found favor with King Achish and was living in the land of the Philistines. Then, to add insult to injury, the princes of the Philistines told King Achish they didn’t want David around. They were afraid that David would side with the Hebrews when they went to attack Israel. They persuaded the king to send David out from among them. In the words of Martin, they had to start “stepping”! They were out of there.

They packed up and prepared to go back to their own city called Ziklag – a city that King Achish had given them. They are going back to Ziklag, where they had left their wives and children. They have to get out of the Philistine’s land and Saul’s army would be looking for them again.

With his troops together they go back to Ziklag thinking that they needed to get themselves ready for the next battle with Saul’s army. But as they arrived at Ziklag on the third day, they found that the Amalekites had already been there. The city was burned; everything was gone. Their wives, sons and daughters were not killed; but they had been taken captive. When David and all the men saw this, there was great weeping until they had no more power to weep. **It had gone from bad to worse.** Ever been in a battle and just when you were prepared to fight that particular battle, another battle surfaced? Ever been in a thunderstorm, when the winds began to blow harder and then you realized you were facing a tornado?

Children and wives are hostages. Homes were destroyed. The little that they had was gone and it appears that David is the blame.

David was distressed; he had lost not one wife, but two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail, the wife of Nabal. The men talked about stoning him – let's kill him, our sons and daughters are gone. Their future was threatened and they felt that somehow things would change if they killed David.

The same men who had earlier **gathered themselves** together around David to make him their leader were now angry because they knew the Amalekites had attacked them as revenge against David. They were angry because David left the city without anyone to guard it. They were mad at David because they joined him thinking God was going to bless them. People will turn on you. You do know that? They will not only turn on you, they will turn against you. As with David and his followers, they don't just go from liking you to disliking you, they go from liking you to disliking you to hurting you.

Did you come over to the Lord's side thinking everyday the sun was going to shine, thinking that you wouldn't have a problem, thinking that satan would back up off of you? Are you saying, "I just got saved last week, I thought things would be fine, look at what I'm going through now!" Have you had any rivers that you found uncross-able, any mountains you found to be un-climbable? Your rent ain't paid; your car has been repossessed, lost your job; your child is in jail, your husband has walked out with somebody else; your wife packed up and left WITHOUT the children; drugs in your system; hell is breaking out everywhere? Don't kid yourself, when it rains, it pours. The Bible says it rains on the just as well as the unjust!

I wonder how David felt? How do you handle it when things have gotten this low? Ask yourself, what will I do? It's for sure that things can change for any one of us, at any moment. There is no special day on the calendar annotated "All hell will break loose Day". Trials and tribulations have your name and there is a day they will be at your door ringing the doorbell. Whether you want them to be at your door or not, you have to open the door. You can go to the doctor tomorrow feeling great and the doctor can tell you something that can radically change the way you live the rest of your life. You can work all week long expecting to get paid, only to find the company is bankrupt and the doors locked when you come to pick up your paycheck.

Oh yes, the winds of life can be contrary in a matter of moments. What are you going to do when life gets so bad? You face the world looking all sanctified and holy, but there is a whole lot going on in your life. You wave your hand in church because everybody else is waving their hand. You smile because it is the right thing to do. You "fall" slained in the Spirit because everybody else is falling. You said "yes, Lord" because everybody else said "yes, Lord" – but on the inside of you, you are holding on for dear life. You are holding on to a thread, held together with paper clips, duct tape, and bubble gum, trying to see how you are going to get from here to the next point. You say to yourself, **"This can't be the way!"**

Now back to David. Instead of working on a plan to rescue their families, David's followers blamed him and wanted to stone him, but the text says, "...but David **encouraged himself in the Lord his God**." David found his strength in God and began looking for a solution instead of a scapegoat. David's trust in God overcame his fear of physical death. David stood on a sure foundation of faith. David knew that walking in fear of physical death would undermine his basic faith, leading to "spiritual death". He knew that God was in His holy temple, and that God's throne was established in heaven and that God's eyes behold what goes on down here.

Most of the time we encourage someone else but there comes some moments when you got to encourage yourself – you have to understand there won't be anybody around to encourage you. You can't wait on "the girls" or "the fellas" to encourage you. When you call your prayer partner and the line is busy, or you call your best friend and he or she is not at home and you need some encouragement – you have got to be able to encourage yourself. You have to learn when there is no one around to hug you, hug yourself. Learn how to encourage yourself in the Lord! Allow yourself to draw strength from the Lord. Allow the Lord to **provide for you** what you need.

The Solution

I'm going to make three steps to help you on your way and to help build and anchor your faith in God. Three points that will lead you to a positive answer to your questions. Three signposts that undeniably say, "This is the way!"

What does it mean to "encourage myself in the Lord?" **Point one.** Like David, you must literally collapse and glue yourself to the Lord. The Hebrew word used here, *Chazaq*, means to be bound fast, be attached; to harden; to seize, retain, hold fast, to gird. You must realize there comes a moment when you need to collapse on the Lord and stick to Him like white on rice. When we feel discouraged, feeling that no one understands, we often waver between faith and fear. Even in our deepest sorrow, God cares! Jesus reminded us how much God understands us – God knows even the number of hairs on our heads. God knows every problem and sees every tear. God wants us to cast our cares on Him, but often we continue to bear them ourselves even when we say we are trusting in Him. The words of the hymn says,

"There's not a friend like the lowly Jesus, no, not one! No, not one! None else could heal all our soul's diseases, no, not one! No, not one! Jesus knows all about our struggles, He will guide till the day is done; there's not a friend like the lowly Jesus- no, not one! No, not one!"

Quit walking around like you can handle everything that comes your way; that your shoulders are strong enough, you can handle the lies, you can take the trouble, you can take the disappointments. There comes a time when you have to collapse, fall on your knees and say, "Lord, **I** cannot handle this. It is more than **I** can bear! I've had all that **I**

can handle.” Ever had a time when you’ve gone into the bathroom and shut the door and said, “Lord, I just want out, I’ve just got to get away from it. I just want to be free!” You know, times when you don’t want the telephone to ring, you don’t want the doorbell to ring, you just want to be alone to pour out all your pain and misery and just talk about how bad it is? We call it having your private pity party!

Jesus knows about your “DIS – EASE”! There are times when you need to go to the deepest valley and reveal the truest feeling of your soul – to that place where you break. If you are going to break, there isn’t a better place to break than before God. Don’t break before men because they’ll pack you up in a heartbeat and get you ready for the men in the white suits.

If you got to crack, to go crazy - you go to your bedroom, shut the door, don’t let anybody come in, and just lose your mind with the Lord. Crack on Jesus. It is only when we **FULLY** give in that God can begin the resurrection inside us. If you are not willing to admit that you cannot handle what you’re going through, God will lean back and let you keep on trying, let you keep on dealing with it. The moment you come before Him saying, “Lord, I’ve had all I can take, I can’t handle this one more day. Lord, if I have to get up like this tomorrow morning, I’ll lose my mind”, **THEN God** will clear your mind, build a hedge around you, and keep those things you were afraid of from prospering against you.

There are Christians that have been able to rise from what appeared to be the worst positions in the world. You just didn’t see them crack! Oh yeah, you’ve seen them! Everything is falling apart around them and they hold on – you just don’t see them crack. They lose a job and still come out smiling – you just don’t see them crack. They say farewell to an unfaithful spouse and still walk with their head held up – you just don’t see them crack. But without a doubt, they cracked with God. When God finished putting them back together, they stood up saying, “the way may not be easy, but God didn’t bring me this far to leave me.”

There are some experiences that leave you saying, “This can’t be the way!” You’re 35 years old and nothing is happening like you thought it would; you’re 40 and it looks like you’re back at “Go” and you didn’t collect \$200. Like the children’s board game, Chutes and Ladders, you’re 45 and you’ve got to start all over again – going through everything you’ve been through to get where you are. You’re 50 years old and your husband comes in talking about this woman 25 years younger than you that has become the “light of his life”. You may be one of these people or you know someone like this. You have not always been on the upside of life, always been able to sit and declare how happy you are. You remember the week, month and year when your heart was heavy, when your spirit was low, when your heart was crushed. But for the grace and goodness of a mighty great God you never would have gotten up from the ash heap. God picked you up and turned you around, placed your feet on higher ground. If Christians would tell the truth, they would tell you that God gave them the power to get up because **they could not** get up by themselves. God took steps for them that **they could not** take themselves. God held them up when they **could not** hold themselves up.

Isaiah 50:10 asks the question, “Who is among you that fears the Lord? Who obeys the voice of his servant? Who walks in darkness and has no light?” These honest Christian answered, “**I will put** my trust in the name of the Lord **and stay upon** Him.” Like David, they remembered that God **is** in His holy temple and the earth is His footstool, and has not forgotten them in their distress. They didn’t just feel good in hell saying, “I’m just trusting Jesus”. No, they encouraged themselves in the Lord their God saying, “I’m coming out of this. All things are possible with God and I don’t have to stay in this thing.”

David encouraged himself in the Lord his God. All the men had a rock about ready to crush his head in. This was a sad, heart-wrenching scene - all the men were uncontrollably crying. But David, in the midst of all this, was able to get away and encourage himself. What I like about this verse is the last two words, **his God**. This tells us that David had an intimate relationship with God. He **knew** something about the character of God. He knew he could lean against, support himself upon God. He **was sure** that he could rest upon, rely on, place his confidence in God and could really recline, stretch out on God. David knew that his ultimate dependence was upon the Lord. God was his God, not just the God of Abraham, Jacob, and Isaac – but his God. Who is God to you? Is he the God of your grandmother, granddaddy, Sister so-and-so, mother, aunt so-and-so? What do you know about the character of God? Can you say he is my God?

Next, David asked Abiathar the priest to bring him the ephod so that he could inquire at the Lord concerning a plan of action. This garment, the ephod, was used to seek out God’s will. David encouraged himself in the Lord his God, when he came out before these men, his mind was clear and he had a plan. But notice he had a plan but he didn’t just take off with the plan. He inquired at the Lord concerning this plan. Proverbs 19:21 says “Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the Lord's **purpose** that prevails.” Psalm 33:10 says “The Lord foils the plans of the nations; he thwarts the purposes of the peoples.” The Lord Almighty has sworn, "Surely, as I have planned, so it will be, and as I have purposed, so it will stand. For the Lord Almighty has purposed, and who can thwart Him? His hand is stretched out, and who can turn it back? (Isaiah 14:24 , 27) David knew this about his God. David also knew what it felt like to have just a step between him and death because of Saul and he didn’t want to fight against the plans and purposes of God.

David couldn’t go to the Tabernacle to ask the Lord for guidance because the Tabernacle was in Saul’s territory. Therefore he called for the ephod, the only Tabernacle-related object he possessed. In the presence of the priest and this priestly garment, David asked God for direction with very simple questions, “Shall I pursue this troop? Shall I overtake them?”

The priests wore a uniform to the Tabernacle each day. Only the high priest could carry and use the Urim and Thummim, which were kept in a pouch attached to the ephod. The priest’s uniform consisted of two main parts – the ephod and breastplate. The ephod looked like a vest and was worn over the outer clothing. The breastplate was fitted to the

ephod, and sometimes was called the ephod. The breastplate was made of colored 9” square linens. On its front were attached 12 precious stones, each inscribed with the name of a tribe of Israel. This symbolized how the high priest represented all the people before God. The breastplate also contained pockets that held two stones or plates called the Urim and Thummim. The high priest could determine God’s will for the nation by consulting the Urim and Thummim, which names mean “Curses” and “Perfections” and refer to the nature of God whose will they revealed. They were kept in a pouch and taken out or shaken out to get either a yes or no decision.

Point Two. Hebrews 10:1 says all this was a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things. Praises be unto God that we have a High Priest in Christ Jesus, who sits at His right hand. We are priests and can each deal directly with God because of Jesus Christ. Instead of Urim and Thummim, we now have the Holy Spirit, who witnesses to us the will of the Lord concerning our plans. The breastplate of righteousness is part of the whole armor of God.

David had a plan that he inquired at the Lord for direction and clarity. The problem with a whole lot of us is we want God to do everything for us. But like David, you got to make a plan – something that you bring before the Lord. Many of us are living in hell right now, there is a way out of hell – but it isn’t just going to happen. It’s not just going to fall into your lap. You’ve got to plan your way out of some things. The Bible tells us that along with any temptation comes the way of escape. A whole lot of us are in debt. Our situations are real and frustrating. “I don’t have any money right now. The bills are about to kill me. After I get paid, I don’t have a nickel left over.” But we should add to this, “I’m getting out of this. I’m not staying in debt all my life. I’m not going to keep working from sun up to sun down to pay Visa, Master Card, Discover, L. S. Ayres, and Parisians. I’m working me out a plan. I’m coming out of this debt!” You’ve got to develop a plan. God knows that you are at your limit wondering how you are going to deal with that man, or that woman, or that situation. But you must make up in your mind that the God that you know and serve is going to show you what to do.

Expect God to wake you up in the middle of the night. Expect God to show up while you’re driving down the street. Expect God to bump into you while you’re walking down the street. It’s happened to you before, and you know it was God. You were watching television or listening to the radio and God sent your plan right through the T.V. or the radio. You found yourself saying, “Wait a minute, what’s going on? I’ve got my plan. Thank you Jesus!” I know what I’m going to do now, I’m not going to lay down and play dead. Satan you’re not going to kick me any more, I’m getting up and I’m getting out of here because God did not bring me this far to leave me!

Once you set a plan in your mind, you know victory is possible. When you don’t have a plan, you aren’t sure that you can get out. I don’t care what the situation is, you aren’t sure if you don’t have a plan. When you get a plan you say, I know I can get through this now, I may need to modify the plan, I may have to make some changes to my plan, but I know there is a way out of here. A plan is based on your faith. You don’t see it in its entirety – but God makes it happen!

Can you remember when the Lord made something happen that you did not see. I mean you were so sick that you didn't expect to still be alive. Right now, you're healthy and still eating that same old steak and potatoes, fried chicken, ham hocks and greens, taking every opportunity to testify about how the Lord has been mighty good to you.

This is why you have to have a plan. No matter how bad the situation, you must believe you can get out of it because satan wants you to admit defeat – he loves it when you give up. When people have gotten on your last nerve and make you feel defeated, satan loves that. Why? Not just because he likes to make you feel defeated, but because the defeat isn't really yours – it's God. He throws you in God's face as a living testimony that people don't believe Him. But nothing hurts the devil worst than seeing you get up saying, "I've been down long enough, I'm getting up out of here!" Nothing makes satan madder than when you decide you're not going to lay down and play dead and you get up and say Lord, give me that plan. I'm taking back everything that has been lost. I'm getting back my joy, I'm taking back my happiness. I'm going to recover it all. So what, that man left me. So what, that woman left me. So what, I lost that job – my heavenly Father **WILL** supply **ALL** of my needs, He is going to make a way. God will give me a step-by-step plan. That's what happened with David. After he collapsed on the Lord, inquired of the Lord, he told those men, drop those rocks, get on your horse, we're going after the Amalekites as the Lord answered him.

The Amalekites had about a 3-day journey lead on them. They had to ride hard to catch them. By the time David and the 600 men reached the Brook Besor, 200 of the men couldn't go any further. Now before you reach way down into your sanctified grab bag and bring out an accusation against these men, remember that they had lost all and exhausted themselves weeping. Also, now their anger against David had abated. I've been there before. I've had circumstances in my life where I had plenty of energy to rant and rave, weep and wail and threaten. But I was fueled by my anger. But when the anger abated, I fizzled. Also, there are times when God allows us to be driven so that everything that is weak will drop out, and this includes family members, friends, worldly wisdom and knowledge, and superficial faith. Times when everything that is not rooted in Him, falls out.

Here we find David pursuing the Amalekites, using the last bit of energy he had to get what the enemy took from him. He found that he had no time to sit down by the banks of the river for he was in a race for his life and for his family. He had taken the time to encourage himself in the Lord his God, make a plan and get God's okay to pursue and he was using everything God had given him. He knew this wasn't the time or the place to be talking about conserving his energy or his resources. Oh yeah, we go there.

Point three. Part of our problem is we don't know how to PUSH. You just had another one of those shouting matches with your son or your daughter right before Bible Study and now you're saying you don't feel like going. This is not the time for that type of thinking. Your marriage is falling apart and the marriage counselor said something you didn't like at the last session. Now you're saying, I'm not going back. This is not the time

to drop out. You need to go back. Your marriage is about to go down the tubes, your wife is about to leave you; your husband is about to walk out; your children are about to grow up with an absentee parent. You lost your job and have been laid off for 2 weeks and you think you'll just wait on your unemployment check. You were already living from paycheck to paycheck and you have the nerve to say, I'm tired. You better get up and put in your application where people have told you that they are hiring. Even if when you get to the place there are 50 people in line; you need to wait until they review your application and trust God that when it's all over, you'll be the one that is employed. And if it isn't your day, you need to get up in the morning and start all over again and do it until you get a job! You have to make up in your mind that you will put everything you have into getting what God has for you. When you are in a situation like David, you've got to PUSH as hard as you can. You may not want to hear what people have to say, deal with what you have to deal with and PUSH.

While David and the 400 men continued to pursue the Amalekites they found an Egyptian slave in the fields. The Amalekites had left him to die when he became sick. Seeing the severity of the man's condition, David gave him bread and drink. When the Egyptian's strength returned he told David that he was with the Amalekites when they invaded and burned Ziglax. He agreed to take David and the men to where the troops were camping.

Then David attacked the Amalekites from twilight until the evening of the next day and he recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away. Nothing was lacking, either small or great, sons or daughters. Everything that had been taken from David and his men was recovered.

Whenever you find yourself pursuing to get what God has for you, and you PUSH as hard as you have to, keep your eyes open because God is going to raise up some divine assistance for you. If you are out pushing as hard as you can, God is going to raise up somebody that is going to help you along the way. God is going to raise up somebody, something, just what you need. Sometimes you don't understand why the help is coming or where it is coming from, but God says, I heard your prayer and I've seen what you've done since you prayed that prayer and I will not let you suffer loss. Have you ever had somebody put money in your hand when you didn't have money to pay your bills? Have you ever had acquaintances walk right by your side and really understand what you were going through when your best friends and family walked out on you? If you PUSH, God will raise up support for you.

In closing, it is my prayer that you don't give up. Count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. See "this way" as the place to put your faith roots deeper into God in order to withstand the storms. Adversity strengthens real faith and will destroy superficial faith. Realize that the adversity in your life may be there to drive you back to the basics of your faith in God; trust God and draw strength from Him to continue. Trials and grief, whether temporary or enduring, do not destroy God's purpose for your life. Life is not given merely for

happiness and personal fulfillment, but for us to serve and honor God. On this way when facing trials, rather than blaming others or God, ask “what can I learn and how can I grow.” Remember that life’s trials, whether allowed by God or sent by God, can be the means for development and refinement. In your frustration don’t jump to the wrong conclusions. Remember the whole story has not been written. Your vision and experience is limited and you don’t have all the facts. For thus says the Lord, “I know the thoughts that I think toward you, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. Seek me and you will find me when you search for me with all your heart.” Hang in there for all of God’s promises are true. Weeping may endure for a night, but joy is coming in the morning. If you wait upon the Lord, He will renew your strength. Don’t throw away or discount your confidence because it has great reward – you have need of endurance so that after you have done the will of God, you will receive the promise. Yes, the prize is worth the price; for the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. The Lord will fight your battles. Everything will work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. Be not dismayed whatever betide, God will take care of you. Beneath His wings of love abide, God will take care of you. God will take care of you, through everyday, all the way. All you may need He will provide. No matter what may be the test, lean, weary one upon His breast. God will take care of you. And yes, this is the way.

In the midst of your test, in the midst of the storm, don’t panic. Remember David, the shepherd destined to be a king and encourage yourself in the Lord your God. Whenever you are afraid, trust in God. Even in the darkest night, one truth still shines bright; when God is for us, those against us will never succeed.