Where to Turn When You Don’t Know Where to Turn

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Life can be very difficult sometimes. Bills, heartaches, relationship struggles, depression, health problems, unfortunate circumstances — all of these and more tend to pile up on us sometimes. Painful situations know no age, color, culture, gender, or social status. The truth of the matter is that all of us face something difficult in our lives, sometimes more than our fair share!

And when difficulties do pile up, one after another, sometimes we become numb. Sometimes, we want to give up. Even the most mighty among us in the faith have had weak moments of distress, discomfort, disconnect and doubt. When this happens to us, to whom or to what do we turn? I want to propose four answers to this question that all of us have asked at some point in our lives.

• We must turn our head — When faced with life’s struggles, it can be tempting to keep our eyes forward, business as usual, as if we can get through this on our own. What we need to do, however, is to look UP and then we need to look DOWN. “I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth” (Psalm 121:12). After acknowledging almighty God above, we need to bow down our heads in deference to Him and beg for His help, whatever come what may (Php. 4:6-7; 1 Pet. 5:6-7). “Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved” (Psa. 55:22).

• We must turn the pages — God has given us great comfort in His holy Word. “My hands also I will lift up to Your commandments, which I love, and I will meditate on Your statutes. Remember the word to Your servant, upon which You have caused me to hope. This is my comfort in my affliction, for Your word has given me life. The proud have me in great derision, yet I do not turn aside from Your law. I remembered Your judgments of old, O Lord, and have comforted myself” (Psalm 119:48-52, NKJV).

• We must turn around — Sometimes, oftentimes in fact, repentance is what is needed. There are many consequences for our sins, and these consequences have a way of affecting every aspect of our lives. Like the prodigal in Luke chapter 15, we must look at our present circumstances and realize that we were so much better off when we were faithful then when we fell away. Although faithfulness doesn’t automatically make all of life’s difficulties disappear, it does make them much more bearable, because we realize that we have something more to live for, and we have hope.

• We must turn to our brethren — We must never forget about the importance our brethren play in helping us cope with the difficulties of life. Although we may be tempted to bottle things up and bear our cross alone, we need to realize that even Jesus had someone to help carry His cross (Mat. 27:32). If Jesus could receive help in this way, then certainly so should we! Our brethren are here for us to exhort us (Heb. 10:25), to be a listening ear as we confess our faults (James 5:16), to pray for us (also James 5:16), and to help us bear our burdens (Gal. 6:2). If that’s not the definition of spiritual teamwork, then I don’t know what is! Sometimes the very people we should turn to first (after, of course, turning to God), our spiritual family are the last to know about the difficulties we face. Why is that? Perhaps because we are not as close to them as we ought to be.

Oh the heartache we could spare ourselves if we would just follow this advice! Easier said than done sometimes, though. If you are currently facing difficulties in your Christian walk, I would encourage you to — no, IMPLORE you to — think beyond the struggle itself, that is, seek the “higher plane” by seeking God, rather than trying to deal with this yourself. Furthermore, I would implore you to find Scriptures to read that are applicable to your situation, to turn from any sin that may be in your life, and to seek out help from your brethren. Know that you have a preacher and elders who are willing to listen. Find another trusted brother or sister, and just talk to them. Let them know about your struggles. But don’t go at it alone anymore!