

Hope in the darkness

Psalms 34:18 - The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

It is easy to fall back to our understanding when we face hardship or bad circumstances. However, that is when the enemy will try to whisper lies to distract us or convince us to sin. We have to remember that God is with us even in those times where it *feels* like you're alone in hardship or darkness.

The darkness I'm talking about isn't from habitually being in sin, but rather the kind that would come in a hardship or season of waiting and you're still following God while not sinning. So on paper you're doing everything right, but you may "feel" God is distant (even if you're out of sin), you're alone or feel embarrassed asking for help. We must remember that God has shown us who He is related to having hope in those times.

God who sees, saves and stays (John 8-9)

Who sees (9:1-7)

- We have proof that God sees us in our problems and suffering isn't always punishment, but an opportunity for God's work to be revealed
- In the passage Jesus healed the blind man and the disciples assumed with their questions that the man was blind either because of the parents' past sin or the man's.
- Jesus then answered saying this was for God's work to be displayed in the miracle.
- We can remember this when we're in suffering and are tempted to try to assume the cause of it or thinking God has left us (again, only if you're out of sin).

who saves (8:1-12; 9:39-41)

- In the passage, the Pharisees ask Jesus if they are blind and Jesus answers saying, "If you were blind, you would have no guilt; but now that you say, 'We see,' your guilt remains."
- Jesus is showing us that if we come to Him in repentance, we don't have to live in shame or guilt. We can remember this if we backslide and the guilt spirits come.
- Another example was the adulterous woman brought to Jesus. The Pharisees wanted to shame and kill her along with trying to trick Jesus. Yet, the Pharisees left when Jesus asked them to kill her if they were without sin. He then told the woman to sin no more.
- Now if you're out of sin and dealing with darkness, you can lean on this to remember God isn't shaming or condemning you while in hardship but has saved you.

who stays (8:9; 9:32-38)

- God is with us even in the tribulation.
- It's easy to think that God has abandoned you (since that is a lie the enemy will try to speak), however *He didn't abandon us by coming off the cross* so He won't abandon us in our times of hardship.

- I wish there was more to tell than just these thoughts of being alone are from the enemy, but that's exactly what they are.

Finding hope

- Serve others: We are able to serve even in hard times. There's been times where I've been oppressed and didn't want to serve but realized that I would be helping someone else even in the struggle.
 - "If you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday" (Isaiah 58:10).
- Be honest with God: David cries out to God in the Psalms with multiple prayers being honest to God. We can do the same as long as we don't murmur or accuse God for the hardship.
- Ask for prayer: Remember, there is no shame in asking for prayer from your church family (or online group).
- Reread scripture focusing on hope:
 - Who among you fears the Lord and obeys the voice of His servant? Let him who walks in darkness and has no light trust in the name of the Lord and rely on his God" (Isaiah 50:10).
 - "But as for me, I will look to the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me. Rejoice not over me, O my enemy; when I fall, I shall rise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord will be a light to me" (Micah 7:7-8).
 - "It is you who light my lamp; the Lord my God lightens my darkness" (Psalm 18:28)

It's easier to remember this when we're not going through hardship, but we must remember that we will go through it because we are God's children in this world and we have an enemy. This is just another tactic of the enemy to try and affect our minds, but we must remember that God never leaves us and gives us hope.

References

3 reasons for Hope -

<https://fullyknownfullyloved.com/2024/03/11/3-reasons-for-hope-in-times-of-darkness/>

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[https://barbaraleeharper.com/2022/11/13/hope-in-darkness/#:~:text=We%20can%20trust%20God%20in,\(John%2012:24\).](https://barbaraleeharper.com/2022/11/13/hope-in-darkness/#:~:text=We%20can%20trust%20God%20in,(John%2012:24).)

Carol Mcleod Ministries - Ever Christians get depressed -

<https://www.carolmcleodministries.com/joyforthejourney/even-christians-get-depressed-finding-hope-in-the-midst-of-darkness#:~:text=There%20is%20Hope:%20A%20Light,God%20created%20us%20for%20community.>

