

Woman to Woman

"Letter 6"

WOMAN ON TRIAL

PART II

HOW TO MANAGE IN TIMES OF TRIAL

When you can't easily solve your problem, it very well might be time to learn how to *manage* it creatively with God's help. You also need to be careful not to let your emotions get in the way and exaggerate the problem to yourself. Maturity in a woman of character is often noted by how she has learned to respond to her problems in an unemotional, calm, wise and Godly manner (instead of just reacting emotionally).

Keep in mind that you would do well to pray wholeheartedly and boldly, asking God to give you the ability to deal with the worst that could happen. Of course you don't want to dwell on a possible negative outcome, but instead realistically consider what your options could be with a variety of outcomes. Then pray specifically for the best possible outcome - telling God the reasons why you desire it.

In some instances you don't really have a problem to solve, but a decision to make. Maybe you are lacking the courage to make the right decision - the one you know you should. Once you realize that, then you need to pray for *courage* as well.

*Don't be impatient. Wait for the Lord,
and He will come and save you!
Be brave, stouthearted and courageous.
Yes, wait and He will help you.*

Psalm 27:14 (The Living Bible)

Sometimes besides feeling overwhelmed by the problems you have to cope with, have you also mistakenly convinced yourself that no one really

cares about what you are going through? You think it's just you -- all alone? But did you forget about . . .

*Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God,
that He may exalt you in due time,
you can throw the whole weight of your anxieties upon Him,
for you are His personal concern.*

I Peter 5:6 (Phillips)

Notice it says: "throw the whole weight of your anxieties upon Him" – that means every single one of your problems! This means that if no one in the whole house, city, state, country or world seems to not care -- HE DOES! You are His personal concern! This is something you can count on ALWAYS! Isn't this wonderfully reassuring?

I have personally found that I have so many things to pray about that I can't possibly remember them all. It has been incredibly useful for me to make prayer cards out of index cards with headings on each card. For instance, for each family member I have one card and I break things down into various aspects of their lives. First, I thank God for them, then I pray for them regarding such things as their health, marriage, children, job, education, specific problems they may be encountering, and needed areas of character and spiritual growth, etc. Other headings that I have found to be helpful include: healings, church members and friends, church (leaders, goals and needs), community, national, personal, etc. Be creative! Some cards may have constant changes because people do change. When prayers are answered, I mark them with an asterisk and cross them out. Many times I date the items. It's also useful to update these cards as needed.

One of my favorite prayer cards is a section I call 'Answered Prayers'. I am always amazed as I look back through these at the incredible miracles that God has performed. If I am ever tempted to feel down and out, all I have to do is look at these and I am delighted and encouraged – and even overjoyed at what miracles and interventions our Great God has done in His infinite mercy for others and for me – and when you do this, you will be too.

And, when nothing appears to be going right, and there seems to be problems everywhere you turn, you may realize you are well on your way towards feeling depressed and sorry for yourself. Then, what about reminding yourself of this promise:

*. . . I can do everything God asks me to
with the help of Christ who gives me the strength and power.*

Philippians 4:13 (The Living Bible)

Well doesn't it stand to reason that since Christ is going to help you in your trial, then it would also be a good thing to pray and ask Him specifically for the *strength* and *energy* to accomplish what you need to do? I love the

promise of God found in Isaiah 40:31 because it fills me with renewed energy every time I read it.

*But those who wait for the Lord's help find renewed strength;
they rise up as if they had eagles' wings,
they run without growing weary,
they walk without getting tired.*

Isaiah 40:31 (New English Translation)

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Managing your trials with God's help may also be assisted by remembering that God sometimes sends help from some unexpected source. If you are feeling hopeless, depressed and discouraged - and ready to run away from life - Quick! Seek help fast! The worst thing that you can do is to isolate yourself and brood in that dark and negative world of your own. Be sure not to be too proud to tell those in whom you have confidence that you sincerely need their help and positive reinforcement. Begin by taking positive action and making it a point to call or visit fellow believers, and especially enlist their aid in praying for you and your specific trials. Wisely share with them your hopes, dreams, and needs. Never underestimate the power of prayer of others. You will be greatly surprised just how quickly things will begin to happen regarding your problems, especially when you are in the right frame of mind to expect the best.

As women, we have all experienced serious trials and situations in which we have been shaken to our very core. Perhaps you have suffered the shock of the death of a loved one. Or, you have received a terrible report about yourself from your doctor. Here is a great promise to remember:

*I bless the Lord who gives me counsel;
in the night also my heart instructs me.
8 I have set the Lord always before me;
because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken.*

Psalm 16:7-8 (English Standard Version)

Here, David is confident that he will not be shaken by his trials. But notice in verse one (below), that he boldly asks God outright to preserve him. Why did David feel so confident to do this? Because it was in Him that David put his trust.

Preserve me, O God, for in You I put my trust.

Psalm 16:1 (New King James Version)

Have you ever stopped to consider that every problem has its own life span? Yes, each and every one of your problems will pass - they will not last forever. Your problem will eventually be resolved. While you cannot control your problem, you are able to control your response to it with God's help. You see, your response to your problem is crucial. The way you handle a serious trial has the potential to make you a better woman, or . . . if you're not careful, it can make you a critical and bitter woman. Which one will you choose?

Once the storm of your trial has passed and you can hear the birds singing once again, you will clearly see that our trials never last - but a woman who has been strengthened by God does. He is our Defender in the courtroom of life, the One who will give us the power to hold on until the triumphant day when your breakthrough comes! Your prayer HAS been answered!

*. . . I will sing about your strength.
In the morning I will sing about your love.
You are my Defender,
my place of safety in times of trouble.
17 God, my Strength, I will sing praises to you.
God, my Defender, you are the God who loves me.*
Psalm 59:16-17 (New Century Version)

Another thing for us to consider, is that it is vitally important to thank God at the conclusion of every one of our trials for the resolution He has brought to us and others, and for the things we have learned and grown in. It would also be good to put it on your "Answered Prayer" card so you can look back at it in the future whenever you need to be encouraged.

*4 For I cried to him and he answered me!
He freed me from all my fears.
6 This poor [woman] cried to the Lord -
and the Lord heard [her] and saved [her]
out of [her] troubles.
8 Oh, put God to the test and see how kind he is!
See for yourself the way his mercies shower down on all who
trust in him.
9 If you belong to the Lord, reverence him;
for everyone who does this has everything [she] needs.
17 Yes, the Lord hears the good [woman]
when [she] calls to him for help and
saves [her] out of all [her] troubles.
18 The Lord is close to those whose hearts are breaking;
he rescues those who are humbly sorry for their sins.*
Psalm 34:4,6,8-9,17-18 (The Living Bible)

Hardships and trials have been endured throughout the centuries by women who also were hard workers like you, busy keeping their homes, and serving the needs of their families and others. I am continually impressed by studying the encouraging examples of strong women in the Bible. Sarah, Rachel, Rebecca, Hannah, Abigail, Ruth, Esther and others – these were women who were beautiful in God’s sight. They were women who were wise, whose speech was gracious – filled with kind words, compassionate toward others, helpful to their husbands, but most importantly of all, they shared one thing in common – they all possessed a deep abiding faith and love for God. They knew God and understood what He had promised, because they had taken the time to establish a good strong continual relationship with God, totally yielding and surrendering to His will. Therefore, they were confident that God would give them the power, courage, and strength to successfully go through any and all trials.

*Blessed is the [woman] who endures trial
For when [she] has stood the test
[She] will receive the crown of life
which God has promised to those who love him.*

James 1:12 (Revised Standard Version)

The seemingly insurmountable problems you face today will become God’s opportunities to reveal His love and grace to you as you have never known before. Let us then go forward together as strong, courageous and patient women - encouraged and rejoicing in whatever trials come our way. We too can be confident that God will never forsake us, and that He cares deeply about our problems, and is working with each and every one of us to make something beautiful out of our lives. In the process, He is molding our character into truly brave hearted Godly women that are pleasing in His sight!

*After you have suffered a little while,
our God, who is full of kindness through Christ,
will give you his eternal glory.
He personally will come and pick you up, and set you
firmly in place, and make you stronger than ever. 11 To him
be all power over all things, forever and ever. Amen.*

1 Peter 5:10-11 (The Living Bible)

Much love to you all,

Priscilla

"Aquila and Priscilla" is a column on Christian Living, produced by the mutual efforts of long-time Church of God members, James and Martha Morrison - a.k.a. - Aquila and Priscilla.