



Woman to Woman

"Letter 6"

WOMAN ON TRIAL

Dearly Loved Sisters in Christ,

Warm greetings to each of you! Recently I have been thinking a lot about our roles today as Christian women. What comes to my mind is that we find ourselves living in a time that is unparalleled in human history. It is one of instant communication, travel at the fastest speeds ever, global conflicts, major national and international events, and natural catastrophes - all of which we can view anytime we wish on the TV or internet. As we find ourselves in the midst of these challenging and demanding times, many of us are striving continually to live, although imperfectly, by biblical principles.

In conversations with a wide variety of women, I have found that most, if not all of us, share many of the same difficulties and problems (with variations of course). Despite our differences in age, responsibilities, and marital status, most all of us are having to contend with some kind of problems, and some may be experiencing severe trials. Many are even having to handle more than one trial at a time.

How about you? Are you currently feeling overwhelmed by difficulties, emergencies, and trials of various kinds? Are you having financial problems, unemployed, or unhappy in your job? Is your house in the process of foreclosure? Are you having difficulties finding the right Godly husband, challenges with your children, or serious marriage problems?

Perhaps you are a single mom busily playing the role of "superwoman?" Do you find yourself feeling overwhelmed with the daily struggles of caring for your children, trying to make ends meet, and still keeping the household running smoothly?

On top of that, those of you who are moms have the ultimate responsibility to be showing your children the love and emotional support each one needs – and all of this on an ongoing basis! Much of this may include your attending (and supporting) the various functions in which your children are

involved such as scouts, baseball, basketball, football, ballet, gymnastics, music lessons, swimming lessons, etc.

Then comes that all-important responsibility of endeavoring to be the loving, kind, considerate, uplifting, encouraging, and tender-hearted wife that you wish to be for your husband. Are you a woman who regularly strives to carve out some quiet time to share with your husband? And somewhere in-between all of this juggling, you probably are secretly hoping to find time to pursue your favorite hobbies such as music or art, plus some of the things that you find enjoyable and comforting to do like gardening or sewing. Sadly, it may be that there never seems to be enough time to do so. If you are like most busy moms, you are often putting your needs at the end of the list. Does all this sound familiar?

But wait! With all this multi-tasking going on, just where does God fit in your life? Notice, I did not mention Him in any of the above scenarios. And yet one thing is for sure, when most of us run into serious trials, the thing we desire most is DELIVERANCE! And of course, at the frantic pace in which we are living life today, we want it fast – like RIGHT NOW! We know that if we were in court - on trial for our lives - we would make it a top priority to get the best defense attorney we could afford!

Let me first share something with you that happened to me recently - when I was in the midst of one of my trials. You see, I came to a startling conclusion when I discovered that my thinking was "stuck in a rut." I found that I kept looking at my trials in the same old way – (after all, aren't we all creatures of habit?). However, after much prayer and reflection, it came to me that I was missing the point entirely. Sadly, what *I wanted* when I was in the midst of the trial was not what God knew I *needed*. While my soul quietly yearned for speedy deliverance, and wondered why it was taking so long, I slowly came to the realization that God, of course, knew the needs of my character better than I did. He knew that what I needed for my personal spiritual growth was more opportunity to improve in the area of patience, and sometimes, even to the extent of patient endurance. I know that God sees the overall picture while my sight obviously is quite limited. This was a whole new perspective for me.

Haven't we all at one time or another prayed for love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness or self-control (Galatians 5:22-23) - fruit of God's Holy Spirit - only to discover that when God gives us the opportunity in which we can develop this fruit - through a trial - that we do not even recognize it as the answer to our prayer? How else can our character be developed? I came to realize that patience (or any other fruit of God's Holy Spirit) will not be funneled automatically into my brain by God just because I asked Him - and then WHAM! - suddenly and amazingly - I become "The patient woman!"

We need to be mindful that God often uses our present struggles for our good – they often become an avenue for more spiritual growth. Our problems

actually have the potential to be turned into great possibilities. God even turns many of our trials into blessings for us! We must also realize that all our restless worry and fretting accomplishes nothing. Instead, we must have enough self-control to wait, rest physically and mentally, and pray. In addition, it is also important to not take any action that we are not convinced God is leading us to do. Let's wait for God, giving him the time and opportunity to work on our behalf. He is our "defense attorney" – working tirelessly for us. Best of all, He always wins!

Another important thing I have been considering regarding our roles as women, is that it really is up to us to set a calm "tone" and positive atmosphere in our home. This is important because it greatly influences how our children later on are able to cope with their own set of problems. They are continually watching, learning, and absorbing from examples around them. If the home environment is filled with constant jangling noises, with family members screaming and shouting at each other, emotional upheavals, and arguments between "uptight" people, then it's time to *make changes* and take definite positive action. This is important, because we know, for a fact, that when most children grow up, they teach their own children in much the same way they were taught. Realizing this, it is wise and vitally important that we work at cultivating a loving atmosphere of calmness, warmth and comfort in our homes. A considerable measure of patience will definitely be required. This usually entails working on our tone of voice when speaking with our children, especially being conscious of not sounding shrill, harsh, loud or angry when we ourselves are under high stress, or because the atmosphere is charged with tension.

*[She] who is slow to anger is better than the mighty,
And [she] who rules [her] spirit than [she] who takes a city.*
Proverbs 16: 32 (New King James Version)

Have we ever fully realized that our own lack of patience can slowly lead to the deterioration of the relationships we value most? Many children and adults are very sensitive and "tender" in their temperament. We need to be very careful not to trample all over them with harsh or stinging words, or to retaliate in anger. Instead, let's always be lovingly sensitive concerning the feelings of others.

We encourage you, brothers and sisters, to instruct those who are not living right, cheer up those who are discouraged, help the weak, and be patient with everyone. 15 Make sure that no one ever pays back one wrong with another wrong. Instead, always try to do what is good for each other and everyone else.
1 Thessalonians 5:14-15 (God's Word translation)

After all, aren't we ourselves attracted to friends who are always patient and comforting to us? Those friendships are surely to be valued.

So when we are troubled with problems or fiery trials, just what should we do? We should begin by going to the true source of all important help - by

humbly getting on our knees before God. Haven't we often been guilty of thinking that everything depends on us? Of course we know it really doesn't, so it's important that we realize how desperately we need God's help! So let's be sure we always give Him the top priority in our lives. This means putting first things first, being sure that we make the time to pray on a daily basis before anyone or anything else gets in the way. We simply must discipline ourselves to do this even if it means we have to get up extra early in the morning before beginning our day's activities.

*Lord, in the morning you will hear me;
in the morning I will present my case to you
and then wait expectantly for an answer.*

Psalm 5:3 (New English Translation)

We will wait expectantly for His answer to our problem since we know we simply don't make it on our own steam. I sometimes like to think of prayer as a way to recharge my spiritual battery.

Remember to not allow yourself to be discouraged if you don't obtain an immediate answer to your prayers. Continue praying in faith, believing and waiting upon God, because you can be absolutely sure that you will get answers to all of your prayers.

For some of you, this can be the beginning of a new spiritual make-over. You see, once you decide to establish a steady relationship with God, even though you may be starting it in a time of crisis, then you can immediately begin claiming some of His incredible promises that are there just waiting for you. In no time at all, you will be amazed to discover that you will always have what you need when you need it. God will provide what is best for you every time!

*Be glad for all God is planning for you.
Be patient in trouble,
And prayerful always.*

Romans 12:12 (The Living Bible)

End of PART I of II

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.