

FINDING STRENGTH DAY BY DAY

-Kids are so funny! A young lady used to take care of little preschoolers at her church and shared a story of one 4-year-old boy that would make her laugh. One Sunday, he asked if she could take him to the restroom. So she took him to the restroom, turned the light on and told him she would wait outside. He closed the door and within a minute she heard him screaming and crying. She quickly knocked on the door and opened it and there he was, standing in the dark with tears coming down his cheeks and fear on his face. She asked, "Johnny, what is wrong?" He tearfully replied, "I turned the light off and it scared me!" She replied, "Well then, Johnny, just don't turn the light off and you'll be fine!" He said okay and they turned the light back on and he closed the door again behind him with a little smile on his face. As she waited, she heard him scream and cry again. She quickly tapped on the door and opened it again and noticed the light was once again off! She asked, "Johnny, what are you doing?" He tearfully replied again, "I wanted to turn the light off again and it scared me again!" She replied, "Johnny, it's simple, if the dark scares you just leave the light on!" Needless to say, he finally left it on after 3 more times of turning it off!

-This may sound so childish and foolish, but how many times have we done things or thought things over and over again that we knew would worry us or scare us, and yet we still do it?

-How many times have we prayed about something worrisome and promised to leave it at the Lord's feet, then immediately after praying begin to worry about it again?

-We keep turning the light on and off of our faith when we do this!

-There was a song written years ago by Carolina Sandell Berg called "Day by Day". How many of you remember that song? (...)

-If you don't, that's okay, it is on the top of our Verse Sheet today.

-Looking at the song, what does the first line say? ("Day by Day, and with each passing moment")

-When you think of the word "moment", how long do you think that means? (It is usually considered 60 seconds or a minute.)

-OK, now remember this as someone shares what the second line of the song says, #2 on our Sheet: ('Strength I find to meet my trials here...')

-What do you think she means by the word "here"? (Here on earth, here in our present circumstances.)

-So, let me rephrase those two lines of the song with what we have just talked about: "Day by day and with each passing 60 seconds, I find strength to meet my trials here on earth!"

-Why do you think Carolina Berg felt compelled to start off with these particular words? (Because we are constantly struggling in a fallen world to find strength to face

these moments. Sometimes it is a struggle to just face every 60 seconds, as in the death of a loved one, or when you or someone you know gets a phone call about a serious illness, maybe a loved one walks out, or it could be the crush of a dream, etc.)

-Let me give you a little history of Carolina Berg, which may help. She was the daughter of a Lutheran pastor in Sweden during the 1800's. When she was 26 years old, her and her father were crossing a Swedish lake when their shipped lurch and her father was thrown overboard and drowned before her very eyes. She wrote hymns and poured out her broken heart in an endless stream of beautiful songs about her faith and her trust in the Lord for strength as she walked this life without her earthly father but with her Heavenly Father.

-Where does your strength come from during moments of great struggle or just daily living? (...)

-Let's continue with this song, to see what else she has to say about this.

-What does the 3rd line of the song say: (Trusting in my Father's wise bestowment!)

-First of all, what does trusting mean? (The Webster's Dictionary says "to commit to a person's care")

-Second, what does bestowment mean? (Webster says "to put in an appropriate place.")

-So, Trusting in my Father's WISE bestowment can be said: "Committing to my Heavenly Father's WISE choice to put me in the *appropriate* place for this moment."

-This can be very difficult to swallow if you are at a place that is devastating, but here is where I want to bring in Jesus Himself, who understands what that feels like. He was in the Garden of Gethsemane, right before His own disciple, Judas, betrayed Him. He was agonizingly praying to His Heavenly Father in that garden because He was about to carry all the sins of the world on His shoulder to the cross. He was all alone praying because all His disciples had fallen asleep on Him.

-Have you been in a similar situation, feeling all alone and praying to your Heavenly Father while others could not or would not empathize?(...)

-It can be very lonely.

-Let's read about this together. It is found in the book of Matthew, chapter 26.

Let's start where Jesus cried out. It is in our first verse on our Verse Sheet:

(Matthew 26:39 "He went a little further and fell on His face and prayed, saying, 'O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You [will]!'")

-What was God asking His Son to do...I shared it earlier? (Take on all the sins of humanity and die for them, and to be separated from God His Father, for a time.)

-After reading this, do you see where Jesus does understand our struggles when God asks us to bear things that He chooses for us to bear for a time that may be painful, but He has a purpose for? (...)

-God promises to give strength as we go through it just as He gave it to His own Son!

-We must remember that God sees the whole picture of our lives and those around us, just as He saw the picture of eternal salvation for all of us through the gift of His Son!

-Who's to say that what we face is not affecting someone else's faith or even our own?

-We need to trust our Father's wise choices for us, and one day we will see clearly why, even if it may not be until we reach heaven.

-Let's go back to the song Carolina wrote, what does line 4 say? ("I've no cause for worry or for fear!")

-Do you really believe this and if so, why? (...)

-To help us with this, let's read what Jesus said to His disciples right before His own crucifixion. He had already told them that persecution for them will come as well.

Let's read what He has to say to them in Verse #2 on our Verse Sheet: (Matthew 10:29-31 "Are not two sparrows sold for a cent? And yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. *Do not fear therefore*; you are of more value than many sparrows!")

-What is Jesus trying to tell ALL of us here as He speaks to His own disciples, for we are His disciples today? (He is telling us not to fear. Here in this verse He is talking to His disciples, knowing what they are about to endure and telling them not to fear. In this same verse, He is reminding us not to fear or worry because we are valuable to God, He knows the number of hairs on our head! And we are valuable to Him because He sent His Son to die for our sins!)

-On this note, would someone read line 5 in Carolina's song: (He Whose Heart is kind beyond all measure!)

-What does this mean to you? (...)

-Do we deserve His kindness? (...)

-To be encouraged even more, let's read Verse #3 on our Verse Sheet together:

(Titus 3:4-5 "But-When God our Savior revealed His kindness and love, He saved us, *not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy!*")

-According to this verse, how kind was God to us? (Immeasurably! Giving us what we didn't deserve out of His kindness, love and mercy! His salvation!)

-Carolina Berg's song continues in line #6 with these words: "Gives unto each day what He deems best!"

-How does this make you feel if you are having a bad day? (Hopefully that He is still worthy of trust. If the God of the universe thinks it is best, I have to trust Him that He knows what that best is for me.)

-Would someone read the last two lines of her song aloud: (“Lovingly, its part of pain and pleasure, Mingling toil with peace and rest.”)

-What do you think this means for you and me? (His plans for you and I will include painful times and times of joy. Our lives will be mingled with toil and also with peace and rest that only comes from Him! He walks with us through the “valleys of shadow and death”!)

-Let’s read verse #4 on our Verse Sheet together with Jesus’ words of comfort for these times: (John 14:27 “Peace I leave with you; My peace I give you! I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid!”)

-What peace do you think Jesus is talking about here? (His perfect peace, from knowing Him as our Savior, He gives us His Spirit of Peace, the Holy Spirit, to live inside of us.)

-How do you receive His Holy Spirit of Peace? (Repent of our sins and have faith in Jesus that He died for them and rose again so we can have salvation and His Spirit of Peace. John 3:16 says “For God so loved the world that He gave [us] His only begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him, shall not perish but have everlasting life.” Then Ephesians 1:13 says “And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in Him with a seal, the promise [of His] Holy Spirit!”)

-So, through salvation, we receive His Spirit of Peace to live life daily on this planet with Him.

-Now, after studying this song and looking at Jesus, please let me share with you in different words what this song “Day By Day” may mean:

**Day by day and with each passing moment of each day,
Strength we can find to meet our trials here on earth,
If we but TRUST in our Heavenly Father’s wise choices for us,
We really don’t need to worry or fear, because God’s heart has a kindness that
cannot be measured for each of us,
He gives to us each day what He knows is best for us,
Lovingly it may be pain or it may be pleasure,
But He will mingle our toils here on earth with His perfect peace and rest that comes
from knowing His heart and having His Holy Spirit living inside of us!**

FINDING STRENGTH “DAY BY DAY” VERSE SHEET

1. Day by day, and with each passing moment,
2. Strength I find, to meet my trials here;
3. Trusting in my Father’s wise bestowment,
4. I’ve no cause for worry or for fear.
5. He Whose heart is kind beyond all measure
6. Gives unto each day what He deems best,
7. Lovingly, it’s part of pain and pleasure,
8. Mingling toil with peace and rest!

VERSES

1. Matthew 26:39 “He went a little further and fell on His face and prayed, saying, ‘O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will!’”
2. Matthew 10:29-31 “Are not two sparrows sold for a cent? And yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. *Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows!*”
3. Titus 3:4-5 “But-When God our Savior revealed *His kindness and love, He saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy!*”
4. John 14:27 “Peace I leave with you; My peace I give you! I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid!”