

Where Are You?

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If you've read very much of what I've written, you'll know one of my favorite quotes is by C.S. Lewis:

"You never know how much you really believe anything until its truth or falsehood becomes a matter of life or death to you. It is easy to say you believe a rope to be strong and sound as long as you are merely using it to cord a box. But suppose you had to hang by that rope over a precipice. Wouldn't you then first discover how much you really trusted it?" A Grief Observed, The Complete C.S. Lewis Signature Classics, p 448

I found myself quoting CS Lewis to a friend this morning after learning she was in a rather dire situation. She asked me, "What have I done wrong? Where am I off in my thinking? What has brought me to this? What am I to learn?" I believe it's good to examine oneself in times of suffering. Her questions are useful. Why? Because suffering comes for two primary reasons:

1. Because our past thinking has brought us to this place and thus by examining our past thoughts, we can re-evaluate, tweak, repent where necessary, and think/act in the proper way. This new way of thinking/acting will bring us to a better place.
2. God knows our full potential and in order to be the glorious beings He knows we can be in eternity, we must travel the road that leads through suffering. Gold and silver are refined in fire, and it is pressure that transforms a coal into a diamond.

When you're someone like my friend who strives to live Christ's teachings to the best of her ability and looks to the Savior in good times and bad, I believe God is telling you He trusts you. He knows He can hang my friend from that precipice and she'll never forsake Him. The thing is, she needs to know she can hang from this cliff and keep on trusting and keep on believing.

In Genesis after Adam and Eve had eaten the fruit from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, God asked Adam, "Where art thou?" Do you really think God didn't know where Adam was? Of course, He knew. It was Adam who needed to know. Adam needed to acknowledge he was hiding from God and why. Sometimes God allows things to happen just so we will wake up and acknowledge where we are, self-assess, and see just how much we've grown. At other times we're so convinced we've mastered a principle the only way God can show us we still have room to grow is to dangle us from a cliff.

So, if you are like my friend -- doing your best to follow God, repenting where necessary and striving to have faith -- then remember this is your chance to prove how much you trust the Lord. He knows you're ready to be where you are. He will never allow you to be tempted above what you are able to resist. He believes in you... keep believing in Him. And if your thoughts and actions need tweaking, then make whatever changes are necessary. He will make all things work together for your good as you love and trust Him (Romans 8:28).

I solemnly testify to you that as you put your trust in God you will be supported in your trials, and your troubles, and your afflictions. You can feel peace even when the greatest burdens are stacked upon you -- so much peace you cannot even feel them upon your back. It is an amazing sensation I know well. Jesus Christ lives and loves you. Learn of Him, trust in Him, for His yoke is easy and His burdens are light (Matthew 11:28-30).