

“The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears them; he delivers them from all their troubles. The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.” Psalm 34:17-18 (NIV)

After the last couple of days I felt it was a good time to put in an uplifting verse (or 2). We all have troubles. Things that are difficult or that we fear to do. Many of us have lost people close to us and even had health difficulties ourselves. The issues with the rising costs of foods and other daily essentials can sometimes - or frequently for many - feel overwhelming and like a great burden. We all want to believe that God has heard our prayers and that He will deliver us from whatever hardship we may be facing - individually or as a community.

Yet, sometimes, this doesn't feel true. Sometimes we want to question the verses in the Bible that speak of deliverance, an ending to troubles and God wanting the best for us. We see the suffering of the world, we feel the suffering we ourselves are going through and those around us are going through and it becomes easy to lose faith. However, God does deliver us and give us a hope and a future. It may seem difficult to imagine right now, but there is always hope, and something to be grateful for.

To help us to not be depressed it is important to find something in each day to be grateful for and to thank God for it. You be currently living in a deep pit from which there feels no escape, but even there, there is something to be grateful for...you may have to use your imagination a bit, but there will be something. God can give complete, miraculous healing from the pits of despair, but He rarely does. He likes for us to grow while He guides and nurtures us through the process. If we have not experienced hardship, then how can we truly appreciate the good things? If we only have the good things in life then and nothing ever goes wrong, we have always had money and ever struggled for a meal in our lives then we cannot appreciate how difficult it is to struggle to find the money for food or how it may take someone 5 years to save up enough money to have the luxury of a single night in a hotel.

God will take each of our troubles, each moment of despair, and use it to our, and His, advantage. We will learn to have empathy for others and as God draws close to us in these times, we too, can draw close to others through shared experience.

Pray

Father in heaven, we know you only want to give to your children what is right but that through our own fault we brought the bad things and troubles into the world. We ask you now to help us to use the problems we face as learning opportunities so that we can come alongside others and show them they are not alone, just as you never leave us alone. We ask for grateful hearts to see all the good things in our lives. Help us to follow in the footsteps of your Son, Jesus, The Christ, by seeing all as equals in your sight. Amen.