

Liberty Commentary November 24, 2008

These past few weeks have been filled with much talk about national and international financial and economic crisis. Many are faced with reduced work schedules or even layoffs. Crises can come in many different forms. It may be financial crisis, health crisis, family or marriage crises and spiritual crises. Life is full of variables and challenges. One thing that you can count on is that you have at some point in your life experienced a crises, or you are now facing a crises and if neither of those scenarios apply to your life, hang on, because you are most likely headed for a crises. We will all face various crises in life. The issue is not how to stay out of crises, but rather how do we react to it once we encounter a crises.

There are at least five things that are universally true for the believer as it relates to how we should react in times of crises.

1) Every crisis is an opportunity to move closer to God. A crisis can push us to spiritual growth, or bring us to the brink of spiritual collapse. In each crisis, there is both the opportunity for growth and the potential for failure. Our response to the crisis determines whether it will become a building block or a stumbling stone in our lives. The Bible virtually promises us we are going to have trouble. Job 14:1 says “Man that is born of woman is a few days and full of trouble”. Jesus says in John 16:33 “In the world you shall have tribulation but be of good cheer I have overcome the world. Our lives are never all success and no failure-all mountaintops and no valleys. Everyone of us will face times when we are up as well as times when we are down, but God wants to use the crises to move us closer to Him.

2) Crises can strengthen you spiritually and bring glory to God. “Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have, for he saith, I will never leave

thee, nor forsake thee” (Hebrews 13:5). “For I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content” (Philippians 4:11). “Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you” (I Peter 5:7).

The Christian life is one of facing problems, not running from them. The reality of life is that you will find as you go through life there will most likely be more days filled with challenges and crises than there will be days of smooth sailing. In our greatest moments of trouble, we need not fear or panic because the power of God’s Spirit will enable us to endure the crisis if we will cast our care upon God and trust Him to work the crises for our ultimate good and His glory.

3) Your crisis will help you discover the depth of your spirituality. Whenever we are squeezed by life’s pressures, whatever comes out of our lives is evident of what is within. What is in the spiritual well of our soul will come up in the bucket. In our moment of crisis, we either rise to the occasion and trust God, or collapse under the pressure. The crisis has a way of helping us understand who and what we really are and it also encourages us to realize that whatever our inadequacies, God can meet our needs.

4) Your crisis will force you to trust God. Many people turn their backs on God at the very moment they need Him the most. In every moment of trouble there comes a point of decision that determines our future destiny. The crisis will reveal our spiritual character. We can either allow our problems to make us better or bitter, the choice is up to us. Job encountered tremendous crises in his life, but he never once turned away from God. Though he was bombarded with one crisis after another Job remained faithful. Job’s motto was this, “Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him” (Job 13:15).

When the greatest difficulties of life confront us, they will always

remind us there is a source of strength beyond ourselves. When the difficulties come, turn your attention heavenward not selfward.

5) Your crisis can become a testimony of God's grace.

Whenever we face the difficulties of life, others are watching us. Husband, wife, children, friend or relative. Someone is watching your life right now! They may not always notice your reactions when things are going smoothly, but when you remain faithful to Christ, even when everything has gone wrong, your spiritual resolve will be a testimony of God's grace in your life. Our lives are not lived in isolation. We are like an open book being read by those who know us best. God is speaking through us by the very way that we respond to His grace which enables us to endure the crisis and rise above it!

May we learn to approach the times of crises as the Apostle Paul did. Paul writes, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us" (Romans 8:35,37).

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