

What to do When the Bottom Falls Out

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I. Introduction.

- A. None of us will get through life “scot-free.”
- B. We will all go through hard times.
- C. We will deal with lost love, lost life, and all sorts of things; what will you do?

II. Two questions you will ask, but should not.

- A. God, why did you allow this to happen to me?
 - 1. God is not obligated to answer our why questions.
 - 2. God sees, He hears, He knows, and He speaks, but sometimes He is silent.
- B. God, where are you?
 - 1. Example of a girl who fell several stories and landed on metal spikes. The mother asked, where was God? The doctor said, he was in the same place he was when His Son took the nails.
 - 2. Some tragedy can be avoided.

III. Two good questions you can ask God.

- A. What has happened? You must face the situation whatever has happened.
- B. As a result of what has happened, what am I going to do?
 - 1. We cannot always control what happens to us, but we can control what we do about it.
 - 2. The story of Job.
 - a. Job was cursed, yet he never knew why he suffered - he never knew the conversation that took place between God and Satan.
 - b. Job proved that Satan is a liar, but he never had insight into his suffering.
 - 3. The story of Joseph.
 - a. He suffered greatly at the hands of his brothers, yet named one of his sons Manasseh, which means “God has made me to forget all my trouble in all my father’s household.” It is not that he did not forget, but the sting was taken away.

b. He named his second son Ephraim, which means “God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction.”

c. He told his brothers that although his brothers meant evil, God meant it for good.

4. The example of Joseph M. Scriven.

a. His bride died before the night of his wedding.

b. His second bride died before the wedding.

c. He experienced illness and all sorts of trial.

d. He wrote a song, “What a Friend We Have in Jesus.”

5. The example of Hudson Taylor.

a. He lost his children; he lost his wife.

b. He told his friends that he has already given that which was most precious to China, and that he would stay. At the beginning of the China Inland Mission there were only 12 and by the time that Hudson died there was over 1000.

6. The example of a blind person who tries to live as normal a life as possible and disciples people. His goal is to glorify God, and he said he could do it blind.

7. The example of a man who was asked to re-possess a car.

a. He was shot through the neck and it clipped his spinal cord.

b. When asked how he was doing, he said “great.”

c. He told the speaker that having a quiet time and memorizing verses really helped. Jesus was with him. He said that he was so fortunate since he still had his mind. He prays for the one who shot him even though he got off free.

IV. The promises of Jesus.

A. When the hard times come, we will always have Jesus’ presence. (Matthew 28:18)

1. Elizabeth Elliot suffered the loss of two husbands, but was not bitter.

2. We have the presence of Jesus - he knows our suffering better than anyone.

3. He also knows temptation greater than we do.

B. All things work together for good for those who love Him. (Romans 8:28)

1. It does not have to be a good thing for God to work in.

2. The promise is that God works good in all things.

V. What we are to do to be ready.

A. Get some depth in your life before that time comes.

1. It is easy when things are going well for us to coast and not develop our walk with God.

2. Develop that deep walk with God every day you live.

B. Do not become bitter.

1. We can easily become bitter towards those who hurt us, to our friends, to those who have.

2. We have to ask God to help us not become bitter towards these and also towards him.

3. Sometimes he does things that we would not choose.

C. Become involved in the lives of other people.

1. It will not prevent you from going into the darkness, but it may help you come out.

2. If you are deeply involved in giving your life away, knowing that God wants to use you in their lives will help you get through it.

D. Determine that you will become an overcomer.

1. A dangerous theology is the 'King's Kids' theology that teaches that God is our servant and will always make us healthy, wealthy, and wise. This is a lie from the pit.

2. While God can heal, sometimes He chooses not to.

3. There will be people in heaven who glorified God by being healed and by dying.

a. Hebrews 11 gives attention to those who suffered and yet showed faith.

b. It is right for us to desire good things, but not to demand them from God.

E. Go to the Word for comfort during the hard times.

1. God ministers to us.

2. God enables us to be a minister.

VI. Review and prayer.

Application questions.

1. What illustration spoke to you the most about suffering? What about it captured your attention?

2. What is it about the two bad questions that are not appropriate? On the other side, why are the two good questions proper to ask.

3. How do the promises of Jesus bring you comfort? What steps will you take today to prepare for future suffering?
