

Gospel Truth

Biblical Instruction and Encouragement for the Mission Field Worldwide.

GOD IS OUR REFUGE

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. —Psalm 46:1

Why is there a need for a refuge? Does not salvation through Christ exempt God’s children from the trouble, pain, and sorrow of life? The answer is clearly “no.” Salvation is a wonderful experience where there is freedom from sin and condemnation. There is inward peace, joy in the Holy Spirit, and the hope of eternal life. However, because we live in a sinful world and are creatures of emotion and feeling, we will all face difficulties. There are times when the sun will seem not to shine, and the inward and outward sorrows of life will try to encompass our souls. When the heart is overwhelmed, it is truly then that there is a need of a refuge.

Thank God there is a refuge to which we can flee in time of trouble. Psalm 46 is a passage of consolation and ministers to the hurting heart and to the soul that is in danger of drowning in the struggles of life. The word *refuge* infers a place of shelter, a place of trust, a place to flee for protection. While everyone in life has problems, and many seek to find solace, consolation, or escape in the things of the world, there is nothing that compares to the refuge that is found in God alone. It is to Him we should flee in times of desperation and trouble. He will truly provide a place of security and comfort and will minister to the depth of the pain so many people experience.

Many saints of God have gone through dark times; some have internalized the trouble and covered it with a smile; and yet the pain and grief gnaw in the depths of their spirits. Oh, child of God, there is help for the hurting heart. God is waiting for you to run to Him with your broken spirit and He will surround you with His great, comforting arms of love and care. He is a “present help in trouble.” God will not be too late, and He will be there to assist and give aid in anything that brings anxiety, worry, or sorrow.

The prophet Isaiah expressed the reality of God’s protection and shelter: “For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat” (Isaiah 25:4). In the storms of life that rage violently and would try to conquer your soul, there is a shelter in the care of our Savior. Weary child, you are not alone. Jesus Christ is moved with compassion for those struggles you are facing today, and He promised to be with you. Isaiah 43:1-3 reads: “But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the LORD thy God, the Holy One of

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“Weary child, you are not alone. Jesus Christ is moved with compassion for those struggles you are facing today, and He promised to be with you.”

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Israel, thy Saviour." The promise was not that there would be no rivers and no fires, but God promised that they would not overwhelm us and that He would be there with us.

Because God is our refuge and strength, David proceeded to say, "Therefore will not we fear...." In spite of the spiritual, political, physical,



financial, and people problems that may exist, we need not be afraid, for God is in the midst, and He will help His people. Psalm 46:5 states that, "God shall help her, and that right early." Another translation reads so beautifully, "at the dawn of the morning." In the time of darkness and night, God will help and bring again the morning sun. In Jesus Christ, there is hope for the hopeless, courage for the despondent, and healing for that which is broken.

"Lean your weary spirit on
the strong arm of Jesus,
and He will hold you up
as you walk through the
wilderness before you."

It is often at the darkest of night when it seems there is no end, that the rays of light break through the darkness. If you are in a battle and struggling, do

not give up. Lean your weary spirit on the strong arm of Jesus, and He will hold you up as you walk through the wilderness before you. If you will just wait on the Lord, your wilderness will be turned into an oasis, and your night will be turned to day.

When your mind is fogged with confusion and your spirit sees no way out of trouble, "Be still, and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10). With God all things are possible, and He will not forsake those who place their trust in Him.

Abundant life is a reality in the Christian life, but it does not remove us from the internal and external battles of a troubled world. The good news is that there is a refuge to which we can flee. "Oh, what peace we often forfeit; Oh what needless pain we bear; All because we do not carry, everything to God in prayer" (*What a Friend*). —Bro. Michael Smith

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RAYS OF HOPE

THE SECRET OF THE SINGING HEART

HEART TALKS

The *Gospel Truth* is a quarterly periodical published in the interest of the Church of God for instruction and encouragement in the truths of the Bible. Visit us online at www.thegospeltruth.org and subscribe to the email notification list to receive current publications. The *Gospel Truth* is printed in many countries for local distribution and is supported by freewill offerings. A tax receipt will be sent upon request.

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Editorial



When I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD shall be a light unto me.
—Micah 7:8

Jesus Christ came to this world because of the Father's great love. He experienced the pain, sorrow, and suffering of humanity to enable Him to intercede for us with compassion and understanding. In a time of great spiritual darkness, Jesus Christ came to lift up the fallen and bring light to the darkened soul.

After deliverance from sin through the saving grace of Jesus Christ, one must still face the battles and trials of this world. The enemy of our soul is doing all He can to destroy hope and bring despair. We must hold on for dear life to the promises of God and cling to the cross, for therein is light and life.

The subject this quarter is "In Times of Trouble." While we in no way want to give the enemy credit nor undermine the wonderful peace that is found in the Lord, we openly acknowledge that there are still troubles of life after one has been saved. We will not be delivered from the heartache of this world until we reach our eternal home in Heaven. It is a blessing to have the Lord by our side to walk with us and support us in the times of trouble.

We preach a message of victory and live it by the grace of God. However, there have been many who have found themselves almost overcome by the darkness of despair and by internal or external pressures and burdens. I do not want to minimize the reality of the struggle that saved people can have within their spirits and with their emotions, feelings, etc. in their journey of living for God.

This issue is different from previous issues in that I have shared writings of the past that I pray will be a blessing and encouragement to those who are in a time of trouble. I have also sat in a darkened place more than one time in my life, and I found it was the presence of God's love and His care for me that brought healing to mind and spirit. The refuge of God is a reality, and we need to abide in the shelter of God's love as never before.

Our children and young people are facing pressures and struggles not seen in past generations. The enemy is no respecter of persons, and he is attacking the saints with a vengeance. The power of God is greater than the power of the enemy, and it is only the light of God that will cause the darkness to dissipate. Saved people too often feel shame in acknowledging their internal struggles, and sometimes there is not a forum in which to openly discuss the nature of these battles. The Lord is the ultimate answer. He will be your "strength in the time of trouble" (Psalm 37:39). I encourage every hurting soul to find someone in whom you can confide and pray with that the power of darkness be broken.

You are loved, you are not alone, and God will be faithful to you!

Michael W. Smith

April 2021

"WEEPING MAY ENDURE FOR A NIGHT,
BUT JOY COMETH IN THE MORNING."
PSALM 30:5



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Promises of God

For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock. —Psalm 27:5

GOD LOVES YOU

The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.

—Jeremiah 31:3

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. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from



the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. —Romans 8:35-39

GOD IS COMPASSIONATE

It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness. —Lamentations 3:22-23

GOD HEARS PRAYER

This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. —Psalm 34:6

GOD IS A REFUGE

The LORD also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble. —Psalm 9:9

GOD WILL NOT FORSAKE YOU

Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee....And the LORD, he it is that doth go before thee; he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed. —Deuteronomy 31:6, 8

GOD GIVES PEACE

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. —John 14:27

GOD WILL GUIDE YOU

Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. —Proverbs 3:5-6

GOD COMFORTS

Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. —2 Corinthians 1:3-4

GOD GIVES REST

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. —Matthew 11:28

On Times of Trouble

GOD WILL RENEW

He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.
—Isaiah 40:29-31

GOD WILL PROVIDE

But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. —Philippians 4:19

GOD WILL MAKE A WAY TO ESCAPE

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.
—1 Corinthians 10:13

GOD HAS PLANS FOR YOU

For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.
—Jeremiah 29:11

GOD WILL FIGHT FOR YOU

And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.
—Exodus 14:13-14



GOD IS YOUR HELP

So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me. —Hebrews 13:6

GOD IS YOUR STRENGTH

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. —Philippians 4:13

THE TRIAL OF YOUR FAITH

Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:6-7).

If we walk close to God, we shall find that in the midst of our trials, even when they are bitter, there is an undercurrent of sweet joyfulness way down in the depths of our souls. The consciousness that we are the Lord's, that He loves us and that He is our Helper, will be sweet in the midst of all our

woes. This may sometimes be obscured by doubts and fears for a time; but if we hide away under His wings and trust securely, the harp of joy will sound in our souls though in the tumult of emotions. We may sometimes have to listen carefully, however, to hear the soft, sweet strains of its melody.

Be patient in your trials; endure hardness as a good soldier; keep up the shield of faith: fight the good fight. In due season your soul will sing triumphant songs of victory, and the joy-bells, pealing out their merry music, will summon God's people to rejoice with you in your Lord and Savior.
—"Heart Talks" by C. W. Naylor

SHUT YOUR HEART'S DOOR TO DOUBTING

"RAYS OF HOPE" BY D. O. TEASLEY



Doubting God and His Word is a habit imposed by the devil, and the longer it is indulged in, the stronger becomes its binding power. Doubting causes a path, or furrow, on the brain like a path across an orchard or a field where many feet have trod; and nothing but a stern resistance and the power of God can ever erase these furrows

and break the habit of doubting. I repeat that doubting is a habit, imposed by the devil....

Possibly the worst phase of doubting is doubting what God has done for the soul. Those who are habitual doubters often do much praying but do very little believing. If Satan can succeed in getting you to doubt your experience and cast away your confidence, he has gained an inroad to the soul, which, if not quickly closed, is liable to cause prolonged trouble. I have known persons to doubt their experience, go and ask God's forgiveness, and doubt Him again before rising from prayer. Doubting spirits and accusing spirits are very closely allied and often work together.

To some people doubting becomes almost a second nature, and doubting becomes much easier than believing. If such people would treat the doubting spirit as some people treat peddlers, they would not be troubled so much. Some people shut the door in the peddler's face notwithstanding his pleas to show his goods. If people would always shut their hearts' doors to all doubts regardless of their earnest pleas for entrance, they would soon cease to come so often.

Doubts are like visitors—if they are entertained, they will stay; but if no attention is paid to them and instead of entertainment they receive a rebuke, they will not stay long and will not return so often. The unrest and the tortures of the habit of doubting are too well known to the doubter to need comment. ■

SINGING IN ADVERSITY

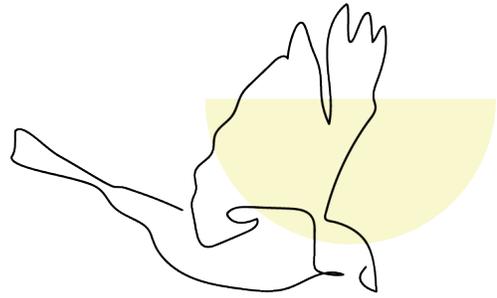
"THE SECRET OF THE SINGING HEART" BY C. W. NAYLOR



Life has its adversities. It must need have them. Adversity, pain, sorrow, and disappointment are the lathe upon which God shapes us. They are the emery wheel that grinds and smooths us. They are the polishing wheel that makes us shine. If we can never be happy until we are so situated that nothing which exists may tend to render us unhappy, we shall have little happiness in life. Happiness does not come from a life of ease and indolence. It is not the result of the absence of obstacles and difficulties.

Happiness comes from triumphing over them....

In adversity we sing a different song than we do when we are untroubled. We must join courage to trust. When we do this, we can sing songs of confidence born of our confidence in God's help. We can sing songs of trust that allay our fears. We can sing songs of anticipation as we look forward to the victories that lie before us and at the crown at the end of the road. We can sing in joyful remembrance of God's former mercies. ■



FACING THE SUNRISE

"THE SECRET OF THE SINGING HEART" BY C. W. NAYLOR



It is better to face the sunrise. Even in the darkness, we may face the east with the assurance that dawn will presently come. There shall be new friends for the old friends that are gone. There shall be new hopes for the perished hopes. There shall

be new opportunities instead of the vanished ones. Let us resolutely look away from the sunset to where the dawn shall break again and the glorious light shine anew upon us.

Facing the sunrise must be learned. The natural tendency, especially with very many, is to face the sunset. It is the hopeful Christian who is the joyous Christian. He looks ahead for better things. He is not disappointed. The good things are never all in the past. The things that have been lost may be replaced. What the future brings us will in a great measure depend upon the way we meet it, the outlook we have toward it and the faith with which we respond to it. ■

MAKE YOUR FAITH MASTER YOUR FEELINGS

“THE SECRET OF THE SINGING HEART” BY C. W. NAYLOR



We should have faith in our Christian experience. I have seen many downcast, doubting people. When I asked them, “What is the matter;” some said, “I don’t feel right.” When I asked, “Why don’t you feel right?” some answered, “I don’t know, but I don’t feel right.”

Perhaps you don’t feel right. Well, what of it? Your emotions are not the test of your spiritual state. Some people feel bad physically when there is very little wrong with them, perhaps nothing of any consequence. Others may feel all right when they are in the grasp of a deadly disease. Just so spiritually. You cannot tell by your emotions what is your relationship with God. Your emotions were never intended to be evidences of your spiritual standing. We must stand by faith, learn to exercise faith, and learn to live by faith. Judge yourself righteously. Do not let your feelings master your faith. Make your faith master your feelings. As a general thing, when you believe right you will feel right; but very often faith is based on feelings instead of on realities. It does not matter so much how you feel. How are you? This is to be settled by your faith, quite apart from your feelings; when you settle it, leave your feelings out of the question as evidence.

We should make a practice of building into our lives every day the building blocks of faith; not building blocks of doubts and fears, anxieties, and worries. There are plenty of these building blocks of faith to be had. In learning to build with these building blocks of faith, we learn the Secret of the Singing Heart—of a joyful, happy Christian experience, of certainty for the future, and just as much certainty for the present. ■

OUT OF FAILURE COME THE GREATEST VICTORIES

“THE SECRET OF THE SINGING HEART” BY C. W. NAYLOR



Have you tried again and again to overcome something and still it troubles you? Well, Paul had such an experience. Of course you remember that oft-mentioned “thorn in the flesh.” Paul tried to get rid of that, but the Lord did not take it away. He said, “My grace is sufficient.”

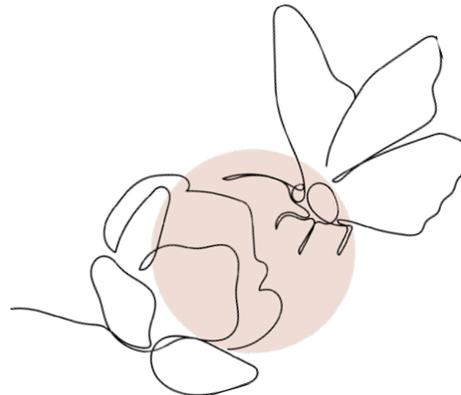
Sometimes we are tempted to look upon ourselves as failures. I suppose all of us come short of our hopes and expectations many times. One thing, however, is certain. We shall never be real failures unless we surrender to circumstances and give up the fight. Sometimes, out of failure come the greatest victories. What seem to be the greatest failures sometimes prove to be the greatest successes.

If you cannot be what you desire to be, be what you can be, and do not be ashamed of it. Do not let mistakes or imperfections prevent you from doing what you should do.

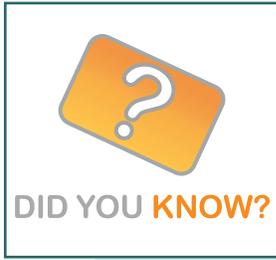
Be the man or the woman you can be and hold up your head and look the world and circumstances in the face and assert your manhood or your womanhood. Say, “I have failed, but I am not a failure. I have failed, but I will yet succeed.”

There are many things that people have to face—home troubles, business reverses, debts, physical disabilities and many like things. But look upon the great names of history and see how many of those who had such things to meet have risen above them and in spite of them have resolutely gone forward to victory.

Whatever there may be in your life that cannot be helped, do not sit down and fold your hands and spend your days mourning. Make the best of it. There is a way out and that way leads to victory and success. ■



“TRULY MY SOUL WAITETH UPON GOD: FROM HIM COMETH MY SALVATION. HE ONLY IS MY ROCK AND MY SALVATION; HE IS MY DEFENSE; I SHALL NOT BE GREATLY MOVED.” PSALM 62: 1-2



The “Heroes of Faith” of the Old Testament went through great adversity and trouble. The apostles of the New Testament faced much opposition, and all experienced a martyr’s death except for the apostle John. The saints around the throne in Heaven had come “out of great tribulation” (Revelation 7:14). Suffering and tribulation are part of the Christian life!



SUFFERING BRINGS THE CAPACITY TO EMPATHIZE WITH OTHERS

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HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD

“HEART TALKS” BY C. W. NAYLOR

Blessed be God... Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. —2 Corinthians 1:3-4

After the Lord called me to His work, I endured some great soul conflicts. In them, I suffered inexpressibly. I almost despaired at times, but I look back upon those things now as being the things that made me understand the human heart, that gave me a broader sympathy—and have since enabled me to enter into the sorrows and needs of others, to minister comfort and help as I could not otherwise have done. Those early sufferings unlocked a thousand mysteries and enriched not only my own life but also the lives of others. Endure these things with patience, for out of them will come to you that which is more precious than gold. If you do not suffer, you can be of little use to those who do suffer.



The promise is, “If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him.”

Abraham suffered in that one supreme sacrifice [of his son, Isaac], but his example of faithfulness in the test has enriched millions of souls. Job suffered not only physical agony but the keenest and deepest of spiritual agony, yet that suffering was only an opportunity for God to manifest His mercy and kindness. How much Job learned of God by enduring through these dark days, and how much the world has learned! If we should take out of the Bible the record of suffering and its results that are written there, we should take out of it all that is best and noblest and most helpful and encouraging. How much poorer we should be if the sacred record told only of joy and peace and comfort, if it spoke only of victory and achievement and told us nothing of the hard road that leads up to them! If the Lord chastises us, it is “for our profit;” if God smites, it is only to enrich; so bear with patience, endure as seeing Him who is invisible. Be “patient in tribulation,” drink the cup of your Gethsemane, wear your thorny crown without complaint, endure your Calvary; for unto you is given both to suffer and to reign with Him. ■