

ANCHORED IN GOD'S WORD

Introduction

This year we have encountered events and circumstances that most of us have never experienced before. We have been facing disruptions and life-threatening circumstances that can easily test our faith, fill us with anxiety, and rob us of our joy.

What are some of the circumstances and challenges in your life that you have been facing this year? (Either in general or personal to you)

How are these circumstances challenging your faith and your walk with Jesus?

In one way or another, we have all experienced some degree of suffering in these past months. We could probably look at some situations and circumstances as more or less an inconvenience, while other situations cause us real pain.

I found an interesting definition of suffering in my study Bible the other day. It said, ***“Suffering should be thought of as the necessary pain that accompanies spiritual growth.”***

While none of us enjoys suffering, I certainly want to grow stronger in my faith and in my relationship with Jesus. And I'm sure you do too. Whether we like it or not, suffering helps us to do just that.

Why do think this is true?

So how do we do this? How do we stay strong and close to Jesus as we go through difficult times? I believe that an important part of this is staying anchored in God's Word. In order to stand strong, we need to trust in God. In order to truly put our trust in God, we must know God. And in order to know God, we need to know His Word and His promises, and hide them deep in our hearts.

How have you experienced this in your own life?

Let's look at some of the promises of God, and why we can rely on them.

Anchored in God's Promises

2 Corinthians 1: 3-5 *Our God is the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort*

He **comforts** us in all our **troubles**.

Troubles = physical pressure, like a heavy weight

Comfort means receiving strength, encouragement, and hope to deal with our troubles. How have you received comfort from God, either directly, or through another believer?

Hebrews 6:13-20 *The certainty of God's promises*

The author of Hebrews states that we can trust in God's promises for two reasons:

1. God cannot lie
2. God never changes

This hope is an anchor we can depend on, no matter what circumstances we face.

In Hebrews 11: 8 we read that Abraham obeyed God's command to go to another country, even when he didn't know where he was going. And then he waited for 25 years for the son that God had promised him. Abraham kept on trusting in God, and in His promise, even when God asked him to sacrifice Isaac.

Psalm 31:14-15 I trust in you, O Lord. My times are in your hands.

The Bible tells us that all of life's circumstances are under God's control. Knowing that God loves us and cares for us can strengthen our faith, no matter what we are facing.

Matthew 10:29-31 God knows exactly what is happening to you!

Have you ever thought about the sparrows...the little drab birds?

Jesus said that two sparrows are worth only a penny. Yet not one of them falls to the ground without the Father's consent!

So do not be afraid! You are worth infinitely more!

What are some additional promises God has given us that are meaningful to you?

Hiding God's Word in our Hearts

Here are some suggestions on how we can meditate on God's Word and His promises and allow them to penetrate deep into our hearts. You might consider using your Facebook page, Instagram, Twitter or other social media to share the verses and thoughts.

I encourage you to try one or more of these in the coming week:

1. Choose a Scripture verse. Ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you, as you think about how this verse applies to your life. Ask God to give you insight.
2. Spend some quiet time pondering each word of a promise verse. (For example, "The Lord is my shepherd", or "My times are in his hands.") What does each word mean? Repeat the verse several times, putting an emphasis each time on a different word, and meditate each time on what God is speaking to you. (For example, "The LORD is my shepherd; The Lord IS my shepherd; The Lord is MY shepherd; etc.)
3. Ask God to bring the words of the verse to your remembrance throughout the day, as you go about your daily work.
4. Write out a prayer based on the verse.
5. Put the verse to memory, and then review it periodically to keep it fresh in your memory.

There are many other ways to hide God's word in your heart. Ask God to show you ways that are meaningful to you.