

The Winter of the Heart

With the excitement of the season's first falling snow behind us here in the north, comes the potential doldrums of the freezing, blowing winds and piles of cold snow. This time of year creates a feeling of cabin fever for many. A feeling of sadness and boredom is created as one waits for the weather to become less abrasive and more bearable. So too, this feeling can also be felt in a Christian's walk with God. No matter what we are feeling, God is there, and He is real. It is not hard to feel closeness to God when things in our lives are going smoothly. When the bills are being met, our loved ones are healthy, we are surrounded by friends, we feel we are wanted and needed by others, and we have happiness, God feels real and near.

Albeit, life is not always so pleasant. A real test of faith is when one is feeling distraught, empty of joy and full of pain, but he continues to walk with the Almighty. When prayers seem to go no higher than the ceiling and no answers are in reach, yet one continues to give God glory and honor, this is the true test of faith! Perhaps you are dealing with a difficult struggle in life and are feeling this winter of the heart. Don't give up! You are not the only one who has felt this way. God referred to David as "a man after My own heart," and still David recorded his own feelings of spiritual dryness. David wrote in Psalm 10:1, "Why do you stand afar off, O Lord? Why do You hide in times of trouble?" In Psalm 22:1 he penned, "My God, my God, why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far from helping me, And from the words of my groaning?" David continued in Psalm 43:1-2, "O My God, I cry in the daytime, but You do not hear..." and in Psalm 89:49 he wrote, "Lord, where are Your former loving kindnesses?" David, too, felt the dark, cold, loneliness of life's situations. He felt like God had forgotten him, yet we know in Hebrews 13:5 God says, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." Job also felt as if God was far away. Job 23:8-9 reads, "Look, I go forward but He is not there, And backward, but I cannot perceive Him; When He works on the left hand, I cannot behold Him; When He turns to the right hand, I cannot see Him." When you are experiencing a difficult time in life and God feels so far away, how can you stay connected to God? How do you keep your faith in God strong, believing He is real and that He hears your prayers?

Pray: You can pray to God. Tell God just how you are feeling. Tell Him He feels so far away. Tell Him everything and surrender the problem over to God (1 Peter 5:7). God is able to handle all your anger, all your confusion, all your disappointments and your broken dreams. Tell Him! He is listening (James 5:16; 1 Peter 3:12).

Personality: You must remember God's Personality. God is omnipresent. We cannot see Him although He is there all the time (Matthew 28:20; Hebrews 13:5; Psalm 139:7-12). God is unchanging. He is the same God in the good times, and He is God in the bad times (Hebrews 13:8; James 1:17). God is just and all-knowing. God knows everything; thus, He judges perfectly (Isaiah 45:21; Psalm 50:6).

Promises: You must remember that God keeps His promises (Genesis 21). Even when we don't understand, we must remember God will keep His promises (Genesis 22; Proverbs 3:5-6). When nothing makes sense, remember the promises God has made to you (Hebrews 13:5; 2 Peter 1:4). As emotional, created beings, we sometimes experience a winter of the heart. When this spiritual coldness has frozen up your walk with God, take time to pray to God, to remember His personality and to remember His promises. In time, you shall receive a spiritual renewal that will lend forth a bountiful life with God and a glorious crown in Heaven!

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