

How to Survive the Storms of Life

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7 Spiritual Steps to Survive the Storms of Life

Introduction:

1. **Abraham Lincoln was a brilliant Lawyer, before he became a president of US**
 - a. But even as a brilliant Lawyer, Lincoln was notoriously disorganized...
 - b. He had a bulging folder of papers labeled: “If you can’t find it anywhere else, look here”
 - c. It reminds me of a junk drawer in our kitchen... 1 year we cleaned it up but it reverted back
2. **All of us have an outer life—and an inner life...**
 - a. The Outer Life is our Work, our Appearance, our relationships and accomplishments
 - b. Most of our time is spent on our outer-life— to the neglect of the inner life, Your Soul.
 - c. While our outer life is growing—our inner life can become like Lincolns junk folder
3. **Just because your outer life is improving doesn’t mean your inner life is improving**
 - a. Your Inner Life is Private, Invisible and easy to neglect—it gets no applause from anyone
 - b. So even if your outer life is growing in accomplishments—your inner life may feel different
4. **That’s because We are more than just a body—we are a soul**

“And the Lord God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” (Genesis 2:7 KJV)

Since we are both **Body and Soul**, We were not made for this life only—but also for eternity

*“We are not human beings having a spiritual experience,
we are spiritual beings having a human experience.” –Tel-hard*

A Human Experience that Sometimes Includes Trials and Storms of Life

I. HOW TO SURVIVE THE STORMS OF LIFE

1. PRAYER

(1) **PRAYER:** Instead of worry and Anxiety—we’re instructed to Pray **(Phil 4:6-7)**

(2) **PEACE: How Amazing that Paul wrote this from Prison!**

- Peace is not from everything being perfect...
- Sometimes people become controllers because they think if everything goes exactly as they want then they will have peace and happiness
- But Peace is not from life’s circumstances—it is from Christ
- Even in prison he could have peace

(3) **GUARDS YOUR HEART AND YOUR MIND**

- Prayer is so Personal—it is just you and God.
- God says: Cast your anxieties on Him for He Cares for You!
- Jesus taught us about prayer **(Luke 11:9–13)**

2. PROVIDENCE

- (1) **DEFINED:** "Providence is the governing power of God that oversees His creation and works out His plans for it... The God who made the universe also orders and governs it according to his will." (Lexham Survey of Theology)
- (2) **The simplest definition of Providence is: God Provides (Mt 6:26-27)**
- Everything You Need for Life and Godliness and Happiness, has been provided by God! (**2 Peter 1:3**)
- (3) **We Make a huge mistake when we think the THINGS of Life bring us happiness rather than the CREATOR of all Things! (Acts 14:15–17)**

3. PROMISES

- (1) **We Also Handle the Storms of Life By Holding Fast to the Promises of God**
- Even when we're discouraged or suffering—the promises of God are available to us (**Lk 6:20–23**)
- (2) **Jesus said they were poor, they were hungry, weeping and hated...**
- but as children of God they are blessed despite their suffering!
 - Because Being Open and Honest with God... We Know were impoverished w/o Him, we hunger and thirst for righteousness, we weep over our past sins and mistakes and living for God makes us a target for those who hate God.
- (3) **But God has promised eternal life (1 John 2:25)**
- We Think of This as a Future Promise we Receive After Death... and this is certainly true...
 - But There is Sense, for the children of God, in which **eternal life** is not ONLY a "there and then" situation, but it is a "here and now" promise.
 - Meaning Eternal Life is available in the Present Tense according to (**1 John 5:9–13**)
 - Eternal Life Begins When We Are Born Again—Baptized into Christ and Receive the Gift of the Holy Spirit.
 - **However, don't be deceived into thinking a christian cannot fall from Grace. Eternal life is IN HIS SON...**
 - He Who Has the Son Has Life, He Who Does NOT have the Son does not have life.
We Must Remain Steadfast in Christ to Have Eternal Life

4. PERSPECTIVE

- (1) **Without Proper Perspective we form a 'Reality-Distortion Field' Around Us**
- This phrase was coined by the inner-circle at Apple who worked for Steve Jobs... They worked so closely to Steve Jobs they Could See it—but He could not.
 - But We All Have a Reality-Distortion Field we Engage at Certain Times...
 - It Might Be a Self-Confirming Bias... Or a Self-Defeating Bias...
 - Our Own Reality-Distortion Field—in which everything around us is distorted to fit into

EXAMPLE: Someone says things on Social Media that are just plain RUDE...

But When called on it they say: Oh I just speak the Truth and people hate me for it...
—It's a dangerous Mistake to Speak without Thinking and then just call it the Truth

RIGHT IS WHATEVER MEETS MY NEEDS—WRONG is what Doesn't Meet My Needs

- **Some have been in their reality distortion field for so long—they live there!**

“The best way to keep a prisoner from escaping is to make sure he never knows he is in prison.”

– Fyodor Dostoyevsky

(2) But God's Word Gives You the Truth that Sets You Free...

a True Spiritual & Eternal Perspective Through His Word.

- James said if your suffering trials, ask for wisdom from God (**James 1:2–5**)
- Wisdom from above gives you the ability:
 - To see past the apparent to that which is real.
 - To see Past the Physical to that which is Spiritual.
 - To see Past the Temporary to that which is Eternal.

(3) This is the Wisdom that is from Above—it can only come from God

- This is Knowledge You Can't Get in College.
- An eternal perspective you can't get in management classes or leadership seminars.
- It only comes from drinking deeply from the Living Water of God's Word.

5. PRAISE

(1) It's not always easy to Praise God during the Storms of life...

but when we Worship God we remember that God is still in control!

- A few years ago I was so immersed in the political storms and battles I was checking the news headlines on my phone probably 10x a day...
- It is such a helpless feeling because there's nothing you can do about
- Then I remembered Psalm 46... Be Still and Know (Psalm 46)

(2) Job was hit by a Storm of Suffering but still Worshipped God (Job 1:20-21)

(1) Worshipping God Even When Suffering Sounds Counter-Intuitive...

(2) But I Just read a Headline that caught my attention:

'If Your Kids Are Unhappy, Take them to Church' from Federalist Society. ¹

(3) It stated: **A huge burden could be lifted from our children if they had a place to go each week that offered them grace and refuge from anxiety.**

(4) It talks about the rise of a mental health crisis among youth from an number of different factors creating a perfect storm.

(5) Honestly, if you teach our kids the planet is doomed and all life will be destroyed by Man-made Climate Change within their lifetime, It would be disturbing.

(3) The Article cited a 2018 Harvard University study that stated:²

- “Researchers found that people who attended weekly religious services or practiced daily prayer or meditation in their youth reported greater life satisfaction and positivity in their 20s—and were less likely to subsequently have depressive symptoms, smoke, use illicit drugs, or have a sexually transmitted infection—than people raised with less regular spiritual habits.”

¹ The Federalist Society, federalist.com 12/28/22 If Your Kids Are Unhappy, Take Them to Church

² harvard.edu Religious upbringing linked to better health and well-being during early adulthood 9/18

6. PATIENCE

(1) **Patience is a necessary component of the Life of a Christian...**

We Need Patience to Inherit the Promises of God (Hebrews 6:12)

(2) **Enduring the Storms of Life Help Us Develop Patient Endurance**

(James 1:2–4)

7. PERSEVERENCE

(1) **Patience and Perseverance are related to one another, but different:**

- Patience is enduring what is bad around us
- Perseverance is continuing to do good despite the bad around us (Andy Schor)
- Notice How Jesus describes this contrast (Luke 8:14–15)

(2) **This Greek word: *hypomoné* [found 30x in the N.T.]**

(1) It is translated Patience and Perseverance... but there is no single English word which transmits all the fullness of its meaning.

(3) **We Think of Patience as Well, I Don't Like it But I Have to Suffer Through It**

(1) But This is Much More: “It is not the patience which can sit down and bow its head and let things descend upon it and passively endure until the storm is past. It is the spirit which can bear things, not simply with resignation, but with blazing hope; it is not the spirit which sits statically enduring in the one place, but the spirit which bears things because it knows that these things are leading to a goal of glory; it is not the patience which grimly waits for the end, but the patience which radiantly hopes for the dawn. (Barclay, New Testament Words)

So This is Not Just Bearing a Trial Because We Have To...

This is Turing Our Trial Into Victory!

CONCLUSION:

1. This is What Jesus Instructed Us to Do... (Revelation 2:10)

“Be Faithful Unto Death and I Will Give You The Crown of Life” (Revelation 2:10)

2. Horatio Gates Spafford, a prominent and successful American lawyer.

He had become quite wealthy and owned valuable property in Chicago

But even after the Great Chicago Fire he helped many in need who had lost everything.

Two years after the Chicago fire, Mr. Spafford sent his wife and children on a ship to Europe for a vacation as a holiday to relax.

He went to see them off in New York but had to return to Chicago to tend to an unexpected business deal.

The ship was halfway across the Atlantic when it struck another ship and sank.

His wife was found unconscious floating on a plank. His children all drown on that tragic night, Annie was 11 years old, Margaret was 9 years old, Elizabeth was 5 years old and youngest Tanetta was 2 years old.

His wife telegram from Wales “Saved alone, what shall I do?”

Mr Spafford boarded the next ship to see his wife, and when the ship reached halfway across the Atlantic, at the location of the accident, he wrote the words to this song.

I believe He knew the children were now safe with God

We don't know WHAT the future holds—but we know WHO Holds the Future!