



A Higher Perspective in Grief and in Prayer

We need to remember that conditions are always changing, therefore I must not be dependent upon circumstances.

God's
Providence

The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; He makes the plans of the peoples of no effect. The counsel of the LORD stands forever, the plans of His heart to all generations.

Psalm 33:10-11

"Providence is defined as 'the unceasing activity of the Creator whereby, in overflowing bounty and good will, He upholds His creatures in ordered existence, guides and governs all events, circumstances, and free acts of angels and men and directs everything to its appointed goal, for His own glory.'" **

From "The Practice of Godliness" by Jerry Bridges

- **We need to remember** that God is concerned about me as my Father and nothing happens to me apart from Him.

God's
Love

O LORD, You have searched me and known me. You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off. You comprehend my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb... my frame was not hidden from You...

Psalm 139:1-3, 13-14

God's
Detailed
Involvement
in my Life

When I was made in secret, and skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, the days fashioned for me, when as yet there were none of them.

Psalm 139:15-16

- **We need to remember** God's will and God's ways are always a mystery but I know whatever He wills or permits is of necessity for my good.

God's
Wisdom

*In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, **if need be**, you have been grieved by various trials... that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ... receiving the end of your faith; the salvation of your souls.*

I Peter 1:6-9

God's Will;
God's
Purpose

*For we who live are **always** delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So then death is working in us, but life in you... for all things are for your sakes...*

II Corinthians 4:11-12, 15

Our
Perspective

*Therefore we do not lose heart... for our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and **eternal weight of glory** while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.*

II Corinthians 4:16-18

- **We need to remember** what matters is my relationship to God.

Our
Relationship
with Christ

I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. Abide in Me, and I in you... if you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. John 15:1-2, 4, 10

AND FINALLY....

- **We need to remember** that whatever my conditions may be at this moment are only temporary, they are only passing, and they can never rob me of the joy and strength I presently experience in my union with Christ as I abide in Him.

*But what things were gain to me, these I have counted **loss** for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things... that I may **gain** Christ. Philippians 3:7-8*

*And let us not grow weary while doing good... but may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have **suffered** a while, perfect, establish, **strengthen**, and **settle** you. Galatians 6:9; I Peter 5:10*

Keeping a Higher Perspective

With this 'higher perspective' we intercede with expectation and boldness that **believing prayer** affects change in ourselves as well as others.

Intercessory prayer may be defined as holy, believing, persevering prayer whereby someone pleads with God on behalf of another or others who desperately need God's intervention.

God Tells Us to Expect that Our Prayers Will Change Things

*Elijah was a man with a nature **like** ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit. James 5:17-18*

Elijah prayed, and the heavens gave rain... Elijah was a man who had **faith** that his prayers to God would **accomplish much**, even to the point of God's intervention in the course of nature. He **believed** that prayer by a righteous **person does change things** (Psalm 34:6; Isaiah 38:1-5; Matthew 17:21; 26:41, 53; Mark 11:24; II Thessalonians 3:1).

- We must be careful not to accept any teaching that undermines our faith in the power of prayer to bring about God's intervention in our lives or the lives of others. One such teaching is the concept of "fate," the pagan notion that everything we do and everything that happens to us is fixed unchangeably in advance, long before it occurs. Belief in fate is contrary to scripture and causes one to assume that both good and bad are absolutely determined and unalterable, and that nothing is really changed by fervent, believing prayer.
- Scripture teaches that God deals with His children, not through **absolute determinism**, but by **divine providence**, whereby He interacts with and responds to the prayers of the righteous. Our prayers and faith in God do cause many good things to happen that would otherwise not occur (Exodus 32:9-14).

Note from "The Full Life Study Bible"

Knowing God's truth, His ways, and His power breaks the deception that we are helpless and can do nothing to affect change.

LET'S KEEP A GODWARD PERSPECTIVE!

** Passages affirming the truth of God's providence

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| • Genesis 12:17 | • Exodus 8:22 | • Daniel 4:34-35 |
| • Genesis 20:6 | • Exodus 9:29 | • Acts 16:6-7 |
| • Genesis 50:20 | • Ezra 1:1 | • Romans 8:28 |
| • Exodus 3:21 | • Proverbs 21:1 | |

