

“What if”

Writing from a place of *feeling* overwhelmed physically, emotionally, financially, and if I am to admit it spiritually, is not a comfortable place to be writing from. If I lose faith, or do not exercise my faith in this time, the devil has won against me. This kind of trial will reveal the reality in my life of those things that I have believed, and whether I truly trust my Father and His Son for the outcome He has promised.

Most of us are aware of the temptation to sin to our old man—the one we lived in before receiving Christ Jesus, before receiving His Spirit and new life. As the new life in us was *by choice* given the place of dominance over that old life, we have been able in many instances to resist thoughts and

temptations to what is now so obviously sin. There is a temptation that is much less visible to us, and I had fallen victim to it this week. If satan always came visibly to offer sin to us, we would know and be able to resist with our will. As Doug and Paige have often taught, satan will often come to the back door. We are warned about the *wiles* of the devil. **“Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes.”** (Ephesians 6:11 NIV) Wiles are his evil schemes to trick and deceive. Wiles are the MO—method of operation satan uses to get his way with us. The serpent has studied mankind for about 6000 years. He has studied each of us individually for our whole existence. Don’t underestimate him. I can see why those rebuilding the wall with Nehemiah worked with one hand and had a weapon in the other. No matter how much headway we have made in our spiritual life we must remain alert. **The minute we are not on our guard is the minute we are not ready to resist and fight and overcome** by *our powerful testimony* in what He has done, has promised (which is as good as done because of Who has given His word), by *the blood of the Lamb*—its covering and life, and by *our willingness to die* if in our standing it should be required of us.

Don’t think for a minute that satan has less than an intense hatred for you—God’s creation. He not only hates us, but delights in any and all wickedness and suffering he can inflict on us, and so do his demons. It is naive and dangerous to us, as well as ridiculous to think that once we are Christians the demons will only bother us from the outside, as there is still so much of us internally that can give him a right to torment us. In my own recent case I even sided with the devils by despairing of life itself and wanting to be removed from its troubles. I have repented and renounced this agreement. I don’t want to leave a minute before God has accomplished His good purposes for my being here.

I cannot allow myself to be ruled by the **“what ifs”** of the future. There will always be uncertainties about our future. **The bad *what ifs* will lead to fears and hasty decisions.** I have had many fears and made many hasty decisions in the past. The enemy knows how this has been a weakness over and over again in the course of my life. My giving in to this **temptation** is one of the enemies schemes for me.



Knowing that I am not alone in suffering is comforting. **“So humble yourselves under the mighty power of God, and at the right time he will lift you up in honor. Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you. Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. Stand firm against him, and be strong in your faith. Remember that your family of believers all over the world is going through the same kind of suffering you are. In his kindness God called you to share in his eternal glory by means of Christ Jesus. So after you have suffered a little while, he will restore, support, and strengthen you, and he will place you on a firm foundation. All power to him forever! Amen.”** (1 Peter 5:6-11 NLT)

I am strengthened by remembering how God cared for the Israelites for forty years in the wilderness providing food—manna, not allowing their clothing to wear out for that whole length of time. There is much spiritual significance in these graces, but literally it is also encouraging to see a demonstration in the physical of how He is with us in provision and comfort since in these needy bodies we still must live until we receive those heavenly bodies.

“For we know that when this earthly tent we live in is taken down (that is, when we die and leave this earthly body), we will have a house in heaven, an eternal body made for us by God himself and not by human hands. We grow weary in our present bodies, and we long to put on our heavenly bodies like new clothing. For we will put on heavenly bodies; we will not be spirits without bodies. While we live in these earthly bodies, we groan and sigh, but it’s not that we want to die and get rid of these bodies that clothe us. Rather, we want to put on our new bodies so that these dying bodies will be swallowed up by life. God himself has prepared us for this, and as a guarantee he has given us his Holy Spirit.

So we are always confident, even though we know that as long as we live in these bodies we are not at home with the Lord. For we live by believing and not by seeing. Yes, we are fully confident, and we would rather be away from these earthly bodies, for then we will be at home with the Lord. So whether we are here in this body or away from this body, our goal is to please him.” (2 Corinthians 5:1-9 NLT)

I see the necessity of the Prayer Jesus gave us:

“Pray like this:

Our Father in heaven,

may your name be kept holy.

May your Kingdom come soon.

**May your will be done on earth,
as it is in heaven**

Give us today the food we need,

and forgive us our sins,

as we have forgiven those who sin against us.

And don’t let us yield to temptation,

but rescue us from the evil one.” (Matthew 6:9-13 NLT)

I see the necessity of the authority Jesus gives us in His high and holy—Hallowed Name. Authority not just to resist, but to trample on snakes and scorpions and to **overcome all the power of the enemy.** (From Luke 10:19) Authority to fight for others—for their freedom and true identity to be realized in

Christ. Focusing often on their burdens so that the enemy will not gain ground in us as we become overly concerned or preoccupied about ourselves. I notice that it is to **our** Father, not **my** Father, not give **me** my daily bread. It is not forgive **me**, but **us**; and to deliver **us** from the tempting and testing—rescue of **us** from the evil one.

Again, **“In his kindness God called you to share in his eternal glory by means of Christ Jesus. So after you have suffered a little while, he will restore, support, and strengthen you, and he will place you on a firm foundation. All power to him forever! Amen.”** (1 Peter 5:10-11 NLT)