



GUIDELINES DAILY COMMENTARY ON LIVING WITH DR. HAROLD J. SALA

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CHALLENGED FAITH: TURN TOWARD GOD

From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I. Psalm 61:2, KJV

Henrietta Mears, an outstanding Christian leader whose life inspired thousands of men and women, used to say that a college student who gave up his faith had not lost his or her faith. She contended that the person never had any faith to begin with. Life has a way of challenging the foundation of your faith, whether it is by circumstance or factors over which you have no control, and you cry, "Lord, I just can't handle this!" When your heart cries out in pain, there are some things you must do to undergo spiritual rehabilitation.

First, go to the Word of God and identify with men and women whose faith has been tested as yours has. **Guideline #2: Refuse to relinquish what you know to be true.** This is a matter of telling your emotions where to get off, and to hold on to certain facts which you know are true regardless of how you feel. Do not depend on your feelings to remind you of God's love when you are angered by the circumstances of life.

Now **Guideline #3: When your faith is challenged, turn to the Lord but do not turn on the Lord.** The preposition makes all the difference in the world. I have often thought of the words of David in Psalm 61, who cried out, "When my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the rock which is higher than I!" When I cannot handle things, I cry out, "Lead me to the Rock, Christ Jesus, who can lift me up and plant my feet on solid rock."

When Stanley Collins was felled with a heart attack, he thought of the conferences where he was booked to speak, and the writing commitments which were before him. In his heart he cried out, "Lord, why me?" Back from the deep recesses of his heart came a small voice, "Why not you?" One of the things which causes many Christians-- maybe you too--to cry out, "Lord, I can't handle this!" is the mistaken idea that God has exempted us from the problems of life--arthritis, colds, financial problems and personal problems--so when they confront us we forget that He promised to walk with us even through the valley of the shadow of death. That is when we need to take that problem to the Lord and tell Him how we feel in no uncertain terms. It is your attitude that makes all the difference in the world.

In John, Chapter 11, there is a story of two sisters whose brother had died, and when Lazarus was placed in a tomb they both felt that Jesus had let them down. Four days later, Jesus showed up--but too late (so they thought). When they saw Him, both sisters spoke the same words, but with a different attitude of the heart. They both said, "Lord, if only you had been here our brother would not have died!" When Martha spoke these words she spoke in defiance as she went out to meet the Master; but when Mary spoke them she fell at His feet and sobbed them from a broken heart.

When you fall at His feet and pour out your heart, it is then that you hear His voice and feel the touch of His hand. In many homes around the world are small figurines from Italy, reproductions of the Masters; but what most do not realize is that they are made of finely ground marble (dust reshaped into images of the originals). When life grinds you down and you cry out, "Lord, I just can't handle this," let the Master put the pieces together in His image. It is truly amazing what God can do with the broken pieces which you thought were worthless.

As the songwriter put it, "He made something beautiful of my life...."

Resource reading: Philippians 3