

Finally, I told Him He was free to put the heat back on, doing whatever it would take to draw me to Himself. Little did I know what I asked. Little did I recognize the hardness of my heart and what it would take to break me.

Throughout the constant trials of the next twenty years, I asked Him not to take the heat off until He'd accomplished His purposes in my life. He didn't, nor has He yet, though the circumstances have changed. I give Him praise that He loves me so much.

Recently our distress from my wife's Parkinsonism and other difficulties was such that I started asking the Lord to take the heat off again. Realizing what I asked, I recanted and told Him whatever He needed to do in my life was alright. In His love, He sent some relief anyway.

Unusual Advice

For several years I have developed the practice of collecting the correspondence from hurting people who write the ministry and then spending a few hours phoning them. On one occasion, I called a young wife and mother who had written that she didn't know if there was any use seeking the Lord, as it didn't seem to get her anywhere. I came to find out, she was quite sporadic in seeking Him. Still, I didn't emphasize the need of such consistency.

Instead, I asked whether she was willing to let Him do whatever He needed to make her willing to allow His transforming work. She honestly admitted her fear of the idea. Acknowledging that it was bound to be scary, I said, It's for only a short time. From it you, your family, and perhaps countless others stand to benefit for an infinite time. It's simply a wise investment.

Be willing to let God enable you to accomplish the humanly impossible even to be grateful that He sends trials to purge you and draw you to Himself. Let your prayer not be for premature deliverance, but that He would teach you to need Him, trust Him, love Him, lean on Him, depend on Him, run to Him, and throw yourself into His arms of love. Pray that He will teach you to live in vital union with Him, and from Him receive all you need for life and godliness.

Willingness

I know how impossible this may seem, but you can start toward this goal right now by simply resigning yourself and all of your reservations to the Lord. Just give yourself and your future to the God and Savior who wants to carry you in His arms of love all the day long.

Now, let me warn you of the ever-present danger that we may feel we are somehow earning His love and acceptance. Our willingness to be needy and dependent does not merit His love, nor does it earn our deliverance. Never! Our neediness and dependency represent our failure, which qualifies us for His success. But it is our failure and His success nothing can change this. We must not let the world, the flesh, the devil, or all three in concert deceive us.

Our hopeless failure is the beginning of hope in Him. His victory in us is in our defeat. His life in us is fully realized in our death. Hold this wondrous truth in your heart. Thank God for all that reveals your hopelessness and that drives you to have hope in Him alone.

Too Much to Ask?

Will you trust Him enough to let Him do whatever He must in your life so He can give you all the love He longs to give you? If that's too much to ask, my heart aches for you because of what you're so pitifully denying yourself.

It aches, too, for my lovely Lord, because He so longs to give you His love and receive it back from you. And you're denying Him what He wants, perhaps, more than anything else.

As we continue together, you'll learn how intensely trust-worthy our God really is. But if you've learned to mistrust Him as you have people, it will take a while for you to learn how wrong you've been.

So just go on. Put your hand in His. Let Him lead you and show you how much He loves you and how much He really is to be trusted.

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By: Pastor Ron Marr

"LORD, my heart is not haughty, nor my eyes lofty. Neither do I concern myself with great matters, nor with things too profound for me. Surely I have calmed and quieted my soul, like a weaned child with his mother: like a weaned child is my soul within me."

Psalm 131:1-2

When we recognize how needy we really are, why do we still try to live the Christian life as though it were possible for us to do so? Because we honestly believe it is. We really don't believe our Lord's word, Without Me, you can do nothing. (John 15:5).

We're prone to quote, The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it? (Jeremiah 17:9), without knowing it. The doctrine of the depravity of man is widely accepted among God's people. Still we seem to have little conception of its impact on our daily lives as born again Christians.

We Simply Don't Have It!

"No one is good but One, that is, God."
Matthew 19:17

We have nothing good in ourselves. Not now. Not ever. We're dependent on the Lord always for every good thing, whether we like it or not. We have no choice!

Many of us have memorized Romans 12:1-2 with its call to let God have our lives to transform them into His image. Few make any connection with the prior verse in Romans 11:36, "For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever." (Romans 11:36). We have missed the impact of the words, "All things were made through Him, and

OH, TO BE DEPENDENT

without Him nothing was made that was made.” (John 1:3). We don’t seem to realize the truth hasn’t changed: anything good that gets done only occurs because God does it.

Wonderfully Dependent on Him

Can you imagine it? Really? He offers Himself to you. The God of the entire universe, the One who spoke the worlds into existence and created the tiniest microbe, offers Himself to you in love, to provide for every need you have. He gives Himself to you to depend on for everything. Can you dream in your most incredible dreams of anything half as good or half as great?

He Is Our Life and Hope

Our Lord asserts, “No one is good but One, that is, God” (Luke 18:19). But we don’t want to know that this includes us! We can say the words easily enough, but somehow their meaning eludes us.

Paul addressed this issue when he said, “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me” (Galatians 2:20). Only Christ can live the Christian life; we cannot. To try is to live in futility, frustration, and failure.

When God gave us His salvation and His righteousness as a free gift, He didn’t give it separate from the Savior. It is Christ Himself given unto us. Now, living in us, Christ is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. (1 Corinthians 1:30 KJV). He is waiting and longing to be all we need. We simply must become humble, admit our need, and depend on Him to be our supply.

“Christ in you, the hope of glory.” (Colossians 1:27). He is our only hope for living the Christian life.

We’ve Got a Problem

We may not see His willingness to live His life through us as the delightful offer from our tender Father God and our gracious Savior that it is. Instead, strange as we

are, we tend to see it as a threat to our independence. Can you believe it? God taking away our deadly existence to give us His perfect, infinite life is a threat?

Paul candidly admitted, I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells (Romans 7:18). Still looking for a way to save our self-life, we may say, That’s it. Only in our flesh is there no good thing. You’re right, my friend, but I recommend you take out that word, only.

Let the emphasis be reversed. All in us is of the flesh that isn’t of the Spirit, who so wonderfully dwells in us. Only He within us is good and does good, is righteous and does righteousness. We need to accept His word on it and gladly leave it at that.

But, somehow, as incredible as it may be, I may still let the evil one convince me I’m getting a bad bargain! Let’s get this straight once and for all. We have no good thing in ourselves. We’re dependent on the Lord right now and always for every good thing, whether we like it or not. We have no choice.

He has given us Himself to dwell in us richly. In everything we do, say, and think, we have the right, the privilege, and the need to depend on Him, His power, His authority, His resources of whatever we need now, right now. He is ours, and so are all His resources.

We Prefer Our Independence

Our rebel selves prefer to depend on their puny resources in place of His omnipotent, omniscient, infinitely perfect, perfectly infinite resources. Old Testament Israel was destroyed because of this same awful, degrading, destructive spirit of independence. The Lord said through Isaiah:

“You are wearied in the length of your way; yet you did not say, There is no hope. You have found the life of your [own] hand; therefore, you were not grieved. I will declare your righteousness and your works; for they will not profit you. When you cry out, let your collection of idols [your own resources] deliver you; but the wind will carry them all away, a breath will take them. But he who puts his trust in Me shall possess the land, and shall inherit My holy mountain.”

Isaiah 57:10, 12-13

Becoming dependent on the Lord for everything, including our spiritual lives and development, cuts against the grain of the flesh our independent selves. We not only don’t want it, we positively reject it. But our resources aren’t only puny, especially when it comes to spiritual matters, they’re non-existent. Worse, they’re destructive!

Hopelessness Is the Beginning of Hope

It would be well for us to ask ourselves often, Is my attitude right now one of willing dependence on almighty God for all things?

Perhaps your answer leaves you discouraged, bordering even on the hopeless. That’s the perfect place to start!

But if you’ve read this far, and you still think you’re all right, then you’re in trouble. If this is your case, you need to find out if you really know the Lord as your Savior from sin. If you don’t, tell Him you need Him now and receive Him as your own personal Savior. If you do know Him, ask Him to show you your continuing sin and need of Him.

Much to our displeasure, God often uses life’s difficult circumstances to bring us to see our sin and need. Through these, He seeks to tear us from our natural self-reliance. He wants to make us willingly dependent on Him, our all-sufficient God and Savior.

A New Prayer

It is vital that you stop trying to escape whatever makes you more dependent on the Lord. Instead, ask the Lord to teach you to look to Him for the willingness to accept whatever He sends to help drive you to Himself.

An unusual aspect of my own story began nearly twenty-five years before I started seriously responding to God’s drawing. I can recall it so vividly. As I was driving along the St. Lawrence River, I asked the Lord to give me a break. As a youth leader, I’d faced trials I hadn’t anticipated and was deeply hurt by older pastors and leaders.

For the next seven years, God granted my request.