

NAVIGATING THE WHITE WATER RAPIDS OF LIFE

Dick Wakeman Workshop on a Godly Perspective on Hardship and Suffering

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"Do not be afraid, for I have ransomed you. I have called you by name; you are mine. When you go through deep waters and great trouble, I will be with you. When you go through rivers of difficulty, you will not drown! When you walk through the fire of oppression, you will not be burned up; the flames will not consume you You are honored, and I love you". – Isaiah 43:1-4

Great Promises to Claim while Navigating the Rapids of Life

★ God **WILL** give you all the strength and help you need for this chapter of your life.

Isaiah 41:10 – “So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”

Psalms 68:19 – “Praise the Lord; praise God our savior! For each day he carries us in his arms.” (NLT)

★ God has **NOT** given you a spirit of fear.

II Timothy 1:7 – “For God has not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.”

★ Do not be terrified or discouraged, for God **WILL** be with you every step of the way.

Psalms 56:9 – On the very day I call to you for help, my enemies will retreat. This I know: God is on my side. (NLT)

Joshua 1:9 – “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.”

★ Trust God with **ALL** your heart – don’t save a corner for fear to dwell in.

Proverbs 3:5-6 – “Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.”

★ God will meet **ALL** your needs and those of your family during this tough time.

Philippians 4:19 – “And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.”

★ Give **ALL** your anxieties the old heave-ho. Throw **ANY AND ALL** worries away from you and up to the Lord. That is His will for you.

I Peter 5:7 – “Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you.”

★ **God's command – DO NOT be anxious. Instead, come to Him with EVERYTHING and His peace will guard your heart and mind.**

Philippians 4:6-7 – “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Psalms 55:22 – “Give your burdens to the LORD, and he will take care of you. He will not permit the godly to slip and fall.” (NLT)

Psalms 138:3 – “When I called, you answered me; you made me bold and stouthearted.”

★ **God's compassions NEVER fail. They are new every morning.**

Lamentations 3:22-23 – “Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.”

★ **God knows His plans for you and they are designed to give you HOPE and a FUTURE. How? Trust Him and see.**

Jeremiah 29:11-13 – “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

Psalms 138:8 – “When I pray, you answer me; you encourage me by giving me the strength I need.” (NLT)

★ **NOTHING will separate you from the love of Christ. NOTHING.**

Romans 8:35-38 – “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written: “For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.” No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

★ **God orders your steps. What you go through has PURPOSE and God has mapped out every detail of this journey. Trust Him.**

Psalms 37:23 – “The steps of the godly are directed by the LORD. He delights in every detail of their lives.” (NLT)

Isaiah 41:20 – “Everyone will see this miracle and understand that it is the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, who did it.” (NLT)

★ **A godly and mature perspective on rough times.**

Job 2:10 – “But Job replied, “You talk like a godless woman. Should we accept only good things from the hand of God and never anything bad?” So in all this, Job said nothing wrong.” (NLT)

★ **A good person doesn’t escape hardship and suffering.**

Psalms 34:18 – “The LORD is close to the brokenhearted; he rescues those who are crushed in spirit.” (NLT)

★ **The Lord will lovingly work out His plans for your life.**

Psalms 138:7-8 – “Though I am surrounded by troubles, you will preserve me against the anger of my enemies. You will clench your fist against my angry enemies! Your power will save me. The LORD will work out his plans for my life – for your faithful love, O LORD, endures forever. Don't abandon me, for you made me.” (NLT)

★ **The Lord refines us in the furnace of suffering.**

Isaiah 48:10 – “I have refined you but not in the way silver is refined. Rather, I have refined you in the furnace of suffering.” (NLT)

★ **Welcome hard times as friends, not intruders.**

James 1:2-4 – “Dear brothers and sisters, whenever trouble comes your way, let it be an opportunity for joy. ³For when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. ⁴So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be strong in character and ready for anything.” (NLT)

★ **Don’t let suffering embitter you to the only One who can deliver you.**

Job 36:13 – “For the godless are full of resentment.” (NLT)

★ **The Holy Spirit prays for you when you are in distress and don’t know what or how to pray.**

Romans 8:26 – “And the Holy Spirit helps us in our distress. For we don't even know what we should pray for, nor how we should pray. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words.” (NLT)

THE RACE

by D.H. Groberg

"Quit! Give up! You're beaten!"
They did shout and plead.
"There's just too much against you now.
This time you can't succeed!"

And as I start to hang my head
In front of failure's face.
My downward fall is broken by
The memory of a race.

And hope refills my weakened will
As I recall that scene;
For just the thought of that short race
Rejuvenates my being.

A children's race – young boys, young men
How I remember well.
Excitement, sure! But also fear;
It wasn't hard to tell.

They all lined up so full of hope;
Each thought to win that race.
Or tie for first, or if not that,
At least take second place.

And fathers watched from off the side,
Each cheering for his son.
And each boy hoped to show his dad
That he would be the one.

The whistle blew and off they went!
Young hearts and hopes afire.
To win and be the hero there
Was each young boy's desire.

And one boy in particular
Whose dad was in the crowd,
Was running near the lead and thought,
"My dad will be so proud!"

But as they sped down the field
Across a shallow dip,
The little boy who thought to win
Lost his step and slipped.

Trying hard to catch himself
His hands flew out to brace,
And mid the laughter of the crowd
He fell flat on his face.

So down he fell and with him hope
He couldn't win it now –
Embarrassed, sad, he only wished
To disappear somehow.

But as he fell his dad stood up
And showed his anxious face,
Which to the boy so clearly said:
"Get up and win the race."

He quickly rose, no damage done
Behind a bit, that's all –
And ran with all his mind and might
To make up for his fall.

So anxious to restore himself
To catch up and to win –
His mind went faster than his legs;
He slipped and fell again!

He wished then he had quit before
With only one disgrace.
"I'm hopeless as a runner now;
I shouldn't try to race."

But in the laughing crowd he searched
And found his father's face.
That steady look which said again:
"Get up and win the race!"

So up he jumped to try again
Ten yards behind the last –
"If I'm to gain those yards," he thought,
"I've got to move real fast."

Exerting everything he had
He gained eight or ten
But trying so hard to catch the lead
He slipped and fell again!

Defeat! He lay there silently
A tear dropped from his eye –
"There's no sense running any more;
Three strikes I'm out! Why try?"

The will to rise had disappeared
All hope had fled away;
So far behind, so error prone;
A loser all the way.

"I've lost, so what's the use," he thought.
"I'll live with my disgrace."
But then he thought about his dad
Who soon he'd have to face.

"Get up," an echo sounded low.
"Get up and take your place;
You were not meant for failure here.
Get up and win the race."

"With borrowed will, get up," it said,
"You haven't lost at all,
For winning is no more than this:
To rise each time you fall."

So up he rose to run once more,
And with a new commit
He resolved that win or lose
At least he wouldn't quit.

So far behind the others now,
The most he'd ever been –
Still he gave it all he had
And ran as though to win.

Three times he'd fallen, stumbling;
Three times he rose again;
Too far behind to hope to win
He still ran to the end.

They cheered the winning runner
As he crossed the line first place,
Head high, and proud, and happy;
No falling, no disgrace.

But when the fallen youngster
Crossed the line last place,
The crowd gave him the greater cheer
For finishing the race.

And even though he came in last
With head bowed low, unproud,
You would have thought he'd won the
Race to listen to the crowd.

And to his dad he sadly said,
"I didn't do so well."
"To me, you won," his father said.
"You rose each time you fell."

And now when things seem dark and hard
And difficult to face
The memory of that little boy
Helps me in my own race.

For all of life is like that race,
With ups and downs and all.
And all you have to do to win,
Is rise each time you fall.

"Quit! Give up! You're beaten!"
They still shout in my face.
But another voice within me says:
"GET UP AND WIN THE RACE!"

APPLICATION

Think About

- ★ When faced with a hardship, do you immediately bring it to God or do you first try to handle it yourself?
- ★ How do you see past the pain of the moment and the deception of the enemy to gain God's perspective on your difficult situation?
- ★ Do you face suffering by turning to God's Word, prayer and mature believers or do you turn to something else instead?
- ★ Do you characterize yourself as content in your current difficult circumstance? (Philippians 4:12)

A Few Tips When Navigating Rough Water

1. After you have read and understand the implications of the following words, share them with the Lord as your prayer.

"FATHER, I GIVE YOU PERMISSION TO DO IN ME ALL THAT YOU HAVE TO DO TO GET ME TO THE POINT THAT YOU CAN DO ALL THAT YOU WANT THROUGH ME."

2. Seek out another man to whom you can be accountable and ask him to help you begin to look at and accept hard times, sorrows and grief from your Father's perspective.

3. Start memorizing portions of God's Word which shed light, give insight and offer promises on the subjects of life.

Remember: Only you can change your perspective. It is one of life's choices.

I wish you victory and want you to know I am available to help any way I can:

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For further reading and listening

WHERE IS GOD WHEN IT HURTS, by Philip Yancy

TURNING MY MOURNING INTO DANCING, by Henri Nouwen

THE PURPOSE DRIVEN LIFE, by Rick Warren

Visit www.discipleshiplibrary.com and choose topics "Suffering" and/or "Trials"



"No, despite all these things,
overwhelming victory is ours
through Christ, who loved us."
– Romans 8:37 (NLT)