

Day 6:

Scripture: Lamentations 3:21-24

Changing Your Focus, Steps 3-6

After we name our distress and then give it to Christ, we then live moment by moment abiding in His strength.

Steps 3-6 are reflected in Lamentations 3:21-24. The prophet Jeremiah is speaking:

21 Yet this I call to mind
and therefore I have hope:
22 Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed,
for his compassions never fail.
23 They are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness.
24 I say to myself, "The LORD is my portion;
therefore I will wait for him."

3. Keep your mind upon Christ. Note in v. 21 how Jeremiah takes control of what he is thinking about as he faces difficulty. Like Jeremiah we can focus our minds upon Christ. Like him, we can recall to our hearts and minds that God is kind and compassionate in the situation that we are fearful about. We might need to do this multiple times in a day!

4. Know that God wants you to relate intimately to Him. The ultimate end of this process is that God wants to have a deep, abiding, intimate relationship with us. He wants to be our *all*. As Jeremiah states in verse 24, "The Lord is my portion and my inheritance." Jeremiah's thought process brings him to the faith statement that God is his everything.

5. Expect God to help you. As Jeremiah recognizes that God is his portion, he can then say, "Therefore I have hope and wait expectantly for him." We give God our fear (or devastating emotion that wants to control us) and He comes to us and helps us. God is faithful to fill the void after fear with Himself. This builds true hope in us!

6. Live a life of hope. As we grow in recognizing that God is our portion and that He will help us, no matter what, then our soul grows in true hope. We learn that God, whether in a pandemic, tragic loss, or unexpected bad news, will move toward us in lovingkindness. He will fill the circumstances with Himself and with true hope.

In the last few months several women have said to me, "You are a strong, capable woman, Dana." I find this very interesting, but I would like to set the record straight! I am not a strong, capable woman. I am a woman who has learned to and continues to learn to rely on Christ's strength!

As humans we are finite and sinful, but we are not alone. As believers we have access to the One who loves us deeply. When we face circumstances that bring us to emotions that we know are not healthy and that want to control us, we can run to Christ and let Him take charge, grow us, and be our everything! God says:

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. --Isaiah 41:10