

PSALMS 18:23

You, O Lord, are my lamp, my God who lightens my darkness. With you I can break through any barrier, with my God I can scale any wall.

I feel fortunate that my life has been fairly predictable. Things have generally gone my way. Of course the normal ups and downs have always been there, but mostly a pretty smooth path.....until early Spring of 2017. Seemingly, out of the blue, I started with panic attacks. I know this is all too common for people today but this was new for me. I had no idea that something so irrational could cause so much pain. As time passed I became depressed and hopeless. I was unable to sleep well. I had to push hard to get through my workday. I would come home exhausted and dreading another night. I knew I needed help but have always been opposed to prescription medication and was determined not to seek medical advice.

My prayers had turned to pleading for guidance. At a particularly low point I believe God spoke through my wife when she suggested I simply try to find something to be thankful for each day and focus on that. She told me to start with one simple thing.....maybe the sun shining, a bird singing, or being able to walk. Day after day I kept trying to be more thankful. As time passed I felt that God was wanting me to learn to accept the spot I was in and surrender it to Him. This was harder than being more thankful but I continued trying. Things were starting to improve. Eventually I got to the point of even being thankful for and accepting of the anxiety and depression.

About six months into this ordeal, as suddenly as it all had started, I felt a tremendous peace come over me. I knew that God, and only God, had delivered me from the trial. The anxiety and depression were instantly gone and have not returned to this day. I now count those six months as my biggest blessing ever. It taught me to be more grateful for all things and has provided me with much more empathy for others as they experience trials of all kinds. Have you ever heard "Strange and difficult indeed we may find it. But the blessing we need is behind it."? This was my rainbow at the end of the storm. A gift from a God that knew exactly what I needed. I had experienced a God that is truly a lamp.

Matthew Kelly has said, "It is time to stop seeking worldly solutions to spiritual problems." As we suffer through trials or as we watch things happening in our world that we do not like, How easy is it to wonder where God is? We get impatient and often question our situations. We think we can fix things. Don't we need to keep reminding ourselves that God is still on the throne and has told us that evil will not prevail? He has His finger on our pulse and is extremely sensitive to any change. He will come save us when the perfect moment has arrived. So again we can say, "O Lord, you are my lamp, my God who lightens my darkness. With you, I can break through any barrier, With my God I can scale any wall."

8-24-2023

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