Daily Devotion #219

**Rely on the Lord**

**1 Peter 3:14-15 (NASB)** *“But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. AND DO NOT FEAR THEIR INTIMIDATION, AND DO NOT BE TROUBLED, but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence.”*

As much as people think preachers are mostly crazy, and maybe for good reason, I have watched God do things that the world and, sometimes the church, looks at as impossible. Some years ago I had a heel problem that turned into something chronic. It happened while I was in a class at our local CrossFit gym. I was feeling particularly youthful that day as we began our workout, most of which was rope climbs and some calories on the stationary bike, culminating in a sprint in the parking lot. All was well until I decided to take off as fast as I could in the sprint. When I got close to the end of the sprint, something popped, for lack of better words, in my heel. It was so painful I literally couldn’t walk.

For many weeks, which turned into months, I had a terrible pain that wouldn’t go away. Finally, I decided to go to a podiatrist. He said the only way to fix the problem was surgery with an 85% success rate. To which I said, “Thanks Doc, I’ll let you know.”. So, I began to pray and ask God to heal it, which He did. It took a few weeks, but when I put all my hope in the Lord, my heel began to heal. I’m convinced God did that.

My circumstance was so small compared to the one that the believers Peter was ministering to were dealing with that it is almost ridiculous to mention, but it does help make the Lord’s point, which is that there are times when life circumstances are such that only God can fix them. Sadly, many people, and I’m talking about God’s people, turn to everyone in the world for the answer, instead of first turning to God.

This was the case of those dispersed saints in the Roman region. Peter told them they may very well suffer with even loss of life at the hands of their enemies, but they were not to lose heart, not to fear, not to be troubled but always be ready to give an answer as to why they trust the Lord or had put their hope in God. What would have been easy for them was to put their hope in Caesar, to look to him as their God, and listen to the people, but that is not the way of a true follower of Christ.

It is very easy for all of us to listen to those who think they know best, when there are many times only God can fix our situation. I’m not at all saying a doctor is not a gift from God. They certainly are and are extremely valuable to all of us. But, no man, preacher, teacher, parent, etc should ever take the place of only what God can do. Again, all of those people are extremely valuable and helpful in their own way, but there comes a time when every person who says they belong to God must begin to rely on God. For everything. We are to live our days doing all we know to do, going to work or school or whatever is required of us, and do that to the best of our ability. But inwardly, spiritually, emotionally, and physically all of our dependence is to be on God.

In fact, Peter uses a passage from Isaiah to make his point about relying on the Lord. The people in Isaiah’s day were upset with the prophet because he put his confidence in the Lord and relied on the Lord to help Israel instead of doing what the people wanted, which was to turn to foreign kings or powers to help them in their time of need. And those people become very hostile to Isaiah. So Peter uses that example, saying that it is easy to look to others and do what others suggest or push us to do, instead of first trusting God for what we need. And it was our Lord who said in **Matthew 19:26 (NASB) “***With God all things are possible*."

Whatever you are facing today, don’t let others, even if well intentioned, distract you from the One who is to be relied on first. Seek Him in all things and for all things, first. Put your full confidence in Him and His ability. Then watch as He orchestrates events and people to help you get through every situation.