

When the Pressure is On

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It is tempting to think that we know better how to handle our tough moments than God does.

We often wrestle with thoughts like, “Well, Lord, I know I’m not to lean on my own understanding. I know I should trust You. But what you’re doing doesn’t seem to make sense.”

The truth is that when we choose the way of righteousness above the easy way out, there is no sure way to know what will happen next. Wonderful things may happen, or we may be penalized or set back for a time. The big question is, “What is God doing when all the signs are screaming that we are about to fail?”

Here are two pressurizing scenarios that demand we make choices between our way and God's:

- You need \$9,000 because you are six months behind in your mortgage. The only way for you to get all the money is to sell an older car that you own. It would be worth \$9,000 in decent condition, but the engine block is cracked. You are tempted to sell it "as-is, no warranty." What do you do if you would lose your home otherwise?
- You are one research paper away from graduating from college. Because of certain events in your life, you find it impossible to complete a 25-page paper. A friend of yours took that course three years ago and did a paper on the identical subject. If you use his paper, you will pass and graduate. What do you do?

Solomon instructs in Proverbs 3:5-6, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." KJV

The problem is that when the pressure mounts in your life, it is not easy at all to do the righteous thing. No reasonable human being would fault such notable Bible personalities as the Prophet Daniel, for instance, for skipping prayer during the month in which the high officials of Babylon were trying to set him up by convincing the king to make prayer to the Lord illegal. The penalty for praying was too great - a cave filled with hungry lions (Daniel 6). But he prayed anyway, not even trying to hide it.

Daniel could put his life on the line because honoring the Lord was more important to him than his personal fate.

It is evident that every pressure situation we face is a test. How we respond will determine how far we can go in the things of God. It is highly unlikely that we will every have to face such extreme pressures as those that challenged this great man of God. Ours may be more on the order of

those mentioned earlier in this article. No matter their intensity, as we engage in the process of getting to know the Lord better, we will become convinced that obeying Him makes it totally impossible for us to ultimately fail when all is said and done.

You may not be able to see at the moment how God could possibly work things out for you, but if you do what you already know is right (and in the vast majority of situations, you already know what is right), God will work your situation out for good.

Proverbs 3:7 continues, “Don’t be impressed with your own wisdom. Instead, fear the Lord and turn away from evil.” NLT