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## Christian First-Aid Kit

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When you're facing a crisis, remember what Jesus said to His disciples the night before His crucifixion: "Let not your heart be troubled" (John 14:1).

Imagine what it would have been like to be one of Jesus' disciples at the end. They watched as He was arrested, beaten, and crucified. All of their hopes and dreams were rooted in Him, and then He was dead and seemingly defeated.

The confusion, hurt, and pain from that alone were probably unbearable, but then came the thoughts: We have made such sacrifices, leaving family and businesses, risking it all on the belief that Jesus was the Messiah. Might it all have been in vain? How long before they come to get us? That is real stress and pressure.

I believe the disciples were facing a crisis that none of us will ever endure, yet what did Jesus say? "Let not your heart be troubled." That statement is the first step in Christian first aid. When a crisis comes—and it will—reach for the first-aid kit, and let not your heart be troubled.

I personally believe that people's first reactions to a crisis will dictate whether or not they overcome. Most people let their emotions and hurts run their course, giving them time to build huge strongholds of unbelief in their hearts. Then, after the strongholds have been well established, they turn to God and ask for help. They don't realize that it's much easier to keep the storm of a crisis from getting inside their hearts than it is to remove it later.

I think about the testimony of Alan and Debbie Moore, which many of you may have read. Debbie found Alan lying unresponsive on the ground. She called the ambulance, yet refused to panic. She was able to harness her emotions in the face of negative doctors' reports and stand in faith for Alan's healing from a massive stroke. She was so calm that the neurologist accused her of not taking him seriously.

"One-third of his brain is permanently damaged," said the doctors. "His left side is paralyzed. He'll never swallow or speak again, and he'll need a stomach tube for the rest of his life." Yet just nine days later, Alan walked unaided out of the hospital and returned to his job. A second MRI still showed "permanent" damage to Alan's brain, but he remains unaffected by the stroke. He is a walking miracle, and I believe he is alive today because Debbie understood that step one of Christian first aid is to not panic, and "let not your heart be troubled."

We live in a fallen world and tribulations will come. You cannot avoid them, but if you're prepared, you can keep them from getting on the inside of you. I don't care if you've been divorced, suffered financial disaster, or are facing cancer, God can turn your problem around if you will believe and not panic.

You can control your emotions, and you can control your feelings. You can control whether or not you have depression and whether you are encouraged or discouraged. Jesus would not have said to "let not your heart be troubled" if it were not possible. He would be unjust to tell you to do something that you couldn't do. The fact that He told you to do it means you have both the capacity and the power.

In 1 Samuel 30:6, we read that David made the decision to encourage himself in the Lord while in the middle of a huge crisis, facing severe consequences.

"And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: but David encouraged himself in the Lord his God."

David called for the ephod, which is the Old Testament equivalent of the Word of God. He inquired of God, he built himself up, and he encouraged himself. If he hadn't, I believe his men would have killed him. But because he did

encourage himself, his vision came to pass within forty-eight hours: He became king. What the devil had meant for evil, God turned to good.

People come to me for prayer all the time at my meetings. Many believe their problems are unique and often begin by describing just how bad their situations have become. What many are looking for is empathy and my sympathy, but I won't go there with them. It's not because I don't have compassion. In fact, I have enough compassion to say to them, "Get over it and believe God."

I'm telling you, brothers and sisters, you are selling yourselves short. Many of you believe that because you're human, a fearful and paralyzing response in a crisis is normal. The truth is that you are not only human; you've got the Holy Spirit of God living on the inside of you, and therefore you can prevent your heart from being troubled.

When you stand up and do what you can do, then God supernaturally energizes you. Peter couldn't walk on the water by his own human power, but he did get out of the boat under his own power. The moment he took the first step, the supernatural power of God enabled him to overcome and walk on water.

It's also important to keep your problems in perspective. I just returned from a trip to China where I met people in the underground church who have been beaten and tortured for their faith. One man in particular was imprisoned for ten years where he endured unspeakable things, yet he never denied the faith.

Since his release twenty years ago, he has started over 200,000 small home churches. Over ten million people have been reached with the Gospel because of his commitment. For security reasons, most of the people in his churches don't know who he is. He has very little money, and the world will never know of his sacrifice. I can't even tell you his name, because the government is looking for him.

When you speak to people like him, it makes the problems we face here in the West pale in comparison.

There is a devil going around like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour (1 Pet. 5:8). If you never bump into him in this life, it might be because you're going in the same direction. But when you turn around and begin swimming upstream, following God's plan for your life, you're going to get some resistance, and you will need to know how to keep your heart from being troubled.

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