

-An excerpt, “From Valley to Vista” Conference

God Will Come and Reveal Our Blindspots , (The Valley of Sorek, Judges 16)

“If you are experiencing great difficulty in your life and you know that Christ is your Savior, you can pray for God either to deliver you from such trouble or to be with you and help you in the midst of it” (The Full Life Study Bible, p. 1032).

“Faith trusts in advance what will only make sense in reverse” (Philip Yancey).

“Life is lived forward and understood backwards.”

A Look at the word, HELP:

As we prepare to meet Samson in Judges 13-16, I want to spend this week thinking about two words: help and strength.

1. Help (v) defined, “to aid; to assist; to lend strength or means towards effecting a purpose.

The key here being: “to lend strength.” So often we don’t want to ask for help, thinking it is a sign of weakness. But, when we consider the true sense of the word, “to lend strength,” it changes everything. It makes me think of Ecclesiastes 4:8-9,

“Two are better than one,
because they have a good return for their work:
If one falls down, his friend can help him up.
But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up!”

2. To lend means of deliverance.
3. To mitigate pain.
4. To change for the better.
5. Help (n), “aid; assistance; strength or means furnished towards promoting an object, or deliverance, from difficulty or distress.”

Scripture Study	Meditation
Psalm 20:1-5	I can depend on God’s help.
Psalm 33:20	
Psalm 46:1	
Psalm 121:2	
Psalm 42:5	
Psalm 70: 5	
Hebrews 13:6-8	

A Look at the word, STRENGTH:

- 6. Strength (n) defined: “firmness, solidity or toughness; the quality of bodies by which they sustain the application of force without breaking or yielding.
- 7. To strengthen is “to add strength.” Key here being “add.”

In the valleys, we need additional strength that comes from above and beyond normal, human capacity. We need supernatural strength. We must know beyond the shadow of any doubt, that God will “lend strength” and when the forces of difficulty come bearing down upon us, we won’t break or yield.

*Take a minute or two, grab a cup of coffee or tea, and read through the article by Ken Sande, President of Peacemaker Ministries (www.Peacemaker.net) and keep Psalm 37 close by. He writes, “The connection between trust and obedience is revealed throughout Psalm 37. Notice how the promises are interwoven with corresponding commands. Here is the wise and safe path for navigating the struggles and conflicts of life. Trust in God, keep his ways, and he will exalt and protect you. Although this formula is simple, it is not easy. Our doubts, fears, and worldly conditioning constantly tempt us to turn from God and do things our own way. That is why it is not good enough to simply resolve to obey his commandments; we must pray for and seek after dependent obedience.”

Respond to his statement, “Our doubts, fears, and worldly conditioning constantly tempt us to turn from God and do things our own way.” Here is the key to what might keep us from recklessly abandoning to God.

- 1. How does worldly conditioning effect you?
- 2. Do you think family conditioning has effected you? You know, things learned in your family of origins? Armond Nicholi II writes, “Early family experience determines our adult character structure, the inner picture we have of ourselves, how we see others and feel about them, our concept of right and wrong, our capacity to establish the close, warm, sustained relationships necessary to have a family of our own, our attitude toward authority and toward the Ultimate Authority in our lives, and the way we attempt to make sense out of our existence. If any one factor influences the character development and emotional stability of an individual, it is the quality of the relationship he or she experiences as a child with both parents. Conversely, if people suffering from severe nonorganic emotional illnesses have one experience in common, it is the absence of a parent through death, divorce, a time-demanding job, addiction [my note], or for other reasons. A parent’s inaccessibility, either physically, emotionally, or both, can profoundly influence a child’s emotional health.”

World’s Conditioning	Family’s Conditioning
Do you really think God will help you?	

3. Take a few moments to reflect on these thoughts. Begin with this beautiful prayer from the writings of Amy Carmichael:

“Lord, what room is there for troubled fear?
 We know You, Lord, that You are near.
 You will light our candle, so that we may see the way to go.
 There need be no bewilderment
 to one who goes where sent;
 the trackless plain by day and night
 is set with signs, so we won't stray.
 Our paths may cross a waste of sea,
 But that need not frighten you or me;
 Or rivers full to very brim,
 are but open ways to Him.
 Our paths may lead us through the woods at night,
 Where neither moon nor any light
 of guiding star or beacon shines,
 God will not let us miss any signs.
 Lord, grant to us quiet minds,
 That in trusting You, for You are kind,
 We may go on without a fear,
 For You, dear Lord, are always near. Amen.”

Practical Application:

- I. What is a blind spot? An actual condition that exists in our eye. “At one location, called the optic nerve head, processes of neurons collect together and pass as a bundle through the photoreceptor sheet to form the optic nerve (the thick black line extending up and to the left in the diagram), which carries information from the eye to the rest of the brain. At this location, there are no photoreceptors, and hence the brain gets no information from the eye about this particular part of the picture of the world. Because of this, you should have a ‘blind spot’ (actually two, one for each eye), a place pretty much in the middle of what you can see where you can't see.”

Note: “A place pretty much in the middle of what you can see where you can't see.” This resonates with spiritual application. We are so prone to ignorance, esp. when it comes to our faults.

Why do we have a blind spot? Research shows a blind spot to be “the place in the visual field that corresponds to the lack of light-detecting photoreceptor cells on the optic disc of the retina where the optic nerve passes through it. Since there are no cells to detect light on the optic disc, a part of the field of vision is not perceived. The brain fills in with surrounding detail and with information from the other eye, so the blind spot is not normally perceived.”

Note: “A lack of light-detecting.”