

When God lets you Dally in a Valley

Intro: In case you are wondering about the title "When God Lets you Dally in the Valley" that word dally simply means to linger.

Sometimes in life it seems like we just have to linger on and on in some painful valley when we would rather be scaling the heights of some victory mountain.

DOTTIE RAMBO wrote in part

When I'm low in spirit I cry Lord lift me up I want to go higher with Thee

But nothing grows high on a mountain so He picked out a valley for me

And He leads me beside still waters somewhere in the valley below

And He draws me aside to be tested and tried, in the valley He restoreth my soul

Have you ever had a valley experience? You know, the time when the bottom fell out of your mountain top. All of us go through valley experiences in life. Adversity is an inevitable part of life. When difficulties come, we tend to wonder why God has allowed us to suffer. We may even feel abandoned by Him, but Scripture tells us otherwise.

Psalm 23 describes the Lord caring for us as tenderly and faithfully as a shepherd cares for his flock. This passage of God's Word is a reminder that He is always present--loving, protecting, and guiding us. He has a purpose for every adversity He allows. The biblical principle is *We learn more in our valley experiences than on our mountain tops.*

I. Various types of valleys we may face

A. It could be a valley of affliction.

When we get into a storm in our life, the first question we ask ourselves is, how did we get here? What did I do? Do you ever ask that question? 2 Cor. 4:17-18 reminds us that "For our present troubles are quite small and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us an immeasurably great glory that will last forever! So we don't look at the troubles we can see right now; rather, we look forward to what we have not yet seen. For the troubles we see will soon be over, but the joys to come will last forever."

Without faith we will certainly see our circumstances in the valley of affliction and yet often miserably fail to see Christ as the One who can help us in circumstances. So we may not have done anything wrong at all, but because we live on this earth, we may still find ourselves in a valley of affliction

B. It could be a Valley of Temptation

This is a very difficult valley to navigate especially in our sensual world. Temptation is the feeling that accompanies an unsatisfied state thus the desire to have or do something that you know you should avoid

Henry Ward Beecher observed that All men are tempted. There is no man that lives that can't be broken down, provided it is the right temptation, put in the right spot. We read at the start of His ministry that even Jesus was tempted by the devil himself. In other words even Jesus had to spend some time in this particular valley.

You can read about His trip through this valley in Mt. 4:3-10 **We could say it like this:** Each of the temptations of Christ are the same temptations we all face daily:

1. Feeding our self. In other words, seeking to satisfy our appetites instead of seeking God.
2. Seeking power and glory and attempting to manipulate God to gain that goal.
3. To BE as God. To know it all and have it all.

But the good news is that in the end Jesus faithfully and successfully navigated his trip through this valley

C. It could be the valley of trials

There is no one that is exempt from trials in this life.

There was a man who was watching some sheep when a snow storm came in. Those sheep left the apparent safety that it seemed they had under the trees. Instead they went out to stand on the bare hills and face the storm. The guy remarked to the shepherd that sheep were stupid in that instead of remaining in the shelter they stood up facing the force of the storm. The shepherd said that the sheep knew that if they stayed down in the sheltered areas the drifts would come and that would mean death and that their safest place was to stand and face the storm.

I know of people today and this might be speaking to you who want everything to be safe so they stay in the shelter and do not realize that their lives are in jeopardy because they

do not want to face reality. We can be sure that trials and problems will come. We need to take time with Jesus but then go out in His power. In the storm, Jesus will be there as our Shepherd.

D. It could be the valley of disappointment

I read of a challenge that I want to pass on to you. Take the word Disappointments and take away the letter "D" which can refer to word such as Dark, Despair, Destruction, Demons, Death and Doom and replace it with an "H" which could stand for Hope, Happiness, Holy, Home and Heaven and we have words "His appointments."

- One letter can make a big difference in letting God into our life.

II. Facts about valleys

A. Dark valleys are UNAVOIDABLE.

They are going to happen in life - you can count on it. You may be coming out of one right now or you may be in the middle of one right now or you're heading into one right now.

No matter what we think, the fact is that - dark valleys are unavoidable. Job 5:7 says this: *"Mankind is born for trouble as surely as sparks fly upward." The sense is, that as certainly as man is born, so sure is it that he will have trouble.*

The meaning is, that "since afflictions are ordered by an intelligent being "God", and since man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward, therefore it is wise to commit our cause to God, instead of complain against him

So remember, if you are human - there will be dark valleys in your life. and we might as well dally there instead of complain about being in that valley. This valley is an extremely crowded one because very human being on earth will spend some time here

B. Dark valleys are UNPREDICTABLE.

You can't plan them or time them. Dark valleys are unscheduled. They usually come at the worst time - when you don't have time for them and are unprepared for them. Have you ever had a flat tire at a good time? Usually they come when we have to be somewhere and are running late.

Look at what Jeremiah 4:20 says *One disaster follows another. The whole land is ruined. My tents are suddenly destroyed. Their curtains are torn in an instant.*

In a moment - at a most unpredictable time - dark valleys show up.

C. Dark valleys are IMPARTIAL

No one is immune. No one escapes the problems of life. Everyone has problems - good people and bad people. Problems don't care how good or bad you are.

One of the first reactions most of us have is to ask the question, "Why me?" The real question we should be asking is, "Why not me?" Do you think you should be exempt from problems? The fact is problems happen to everyone - including you.

Matthew 5:45 says this: He lets the sun rise for all people, whether they are good or bad. He sends rain to those who do right and to those who do wrong.

Why do we think we should be exempt from problems? We think that when problems come to us that God is not being fair, but is it fair to others to have problems while we skate clean and go on our merry way.

You see God is very fair. We all, without exception, die, we all, without exception, have troubles, we all, without exception, have help if we will take it. Yes, God is more fair than the judge or jury who can be persuaded by some crafty lawyer and a person who has enough to pay for all the endless appeals

D. Dark valleys are TEMPORARY

They have an end. They don't last forever. They are not our permanent residence. When we're in a dark valley sometimes we think we are in a cave that has no way out. The fact is we're not -You see, dark valleys are like a tunnel instead of a cave- there is light at the other end. We may be afraid the light at the end of the tunnel might just be another oncoming freight train but be encouraged because Troubles in our life don't come to stay - they come to pass.

1 Peter 5:10 reminds us Yes, you will suffer for a short time. But after that, God will make everything right. He will make you strong. He will support you and keep you from falling. He is the God who gives all grace. He chose you to share in his glory in Christ. That glory will continue forever.

Even if we live 80 or 90 years and have problems all our life - that is so insignificant compared to the thousands and millions of years you have in Heaven - problem free. For example, a few minutes in a dentist chair getting a root canal can seem like eternity - but in reality it is but a short time which produces a great result - good healthy teeth. Problems are temporary - heaven is eternal.

E. Dark valleys have a PURPOSE

God has a reason for taking you through dark valleys. Whether you have a valley full of doubt, despair, discouragement, or defeat - God has a reason behind it.

We think that valleys are unnatural - they are not - they are a natural part of the landscape. There are financial valleys, relationship valleys, emotional valleys, all kinds of valleys in our lives. You will get through them in time. Look at what 1 Peter 1:6-7 says:

This verse tells us two things.

1. Every problem has a purpose. As metal is put into the fire to make it pliable - so we go through problems is life. The fire heats the metal so it can be shaped and made useful.

2. Some Valleys are deeper than others - Job 1:14-19

Job was in a valley that just got deeper and deeper. In one day, Job was stripped of his wealth. One after another, 4 frightened messengers reported that 500 oxen, 500 donkey and 3,000 camels were stolen; 7,000 sheep were killed by fire from heaven, and his 10 children were killed by a great wind.

The problems we will face in this life will range from the not so bad , to valleys of deepest sorrow and trials much like Job faced. We will know what has happened but we may not know why it has happened - all we can do is trust the Lord...

3. Some Valleys are longer than others

Each valley we come to will be different- some long, some short. We will face problems that will only last for a short period of time. Then there will be those problems that never seem to end...

The best way we can help someone in a valley, someone who is hurting, is to just be there for them. We don't have to say anything (which can often make things worse) just let them know that you care.

Don't try and explain why they are in this particular valley, you don't know why and they

don't know why they are there, but God does. If Job's friends had just listened to him and accepted his feelings and not argued with him they would have helped him greatly.

But the key to remember and to help us when we see a friend in a valley is just that Valleys are valleys, no matter what sort they are. The fact is, when you are in the valley, it is a valley!

III. Responding to the valleys of life

A. Accept reality of the valley

Whenever you accept that there is a problem you then can begin to resolve the issue at hand. Worldly influence has successfully infiltrated our minds and manipulated us to expand small ditches into valleys beyond natural dimension (We make problems bigger than they are). In country language that we may be familiar with, it is known as "Making Mountains out of Molehills"

Christians are going to have valley experiences. But with Spiritual understanding, we know that God has promised he'll never leave us alone. So when we walk through sand, it won't bury us. Walking through fire, it won't burn us; Walking through water, won't drown us. No matter if its fear or failure; trials or tribulations; troubles or turmoil; stress or strain, we need to admit and accept that we are in one of life's valleys. "

B. Be Anxious for Nothing and Grateful for Everything

Phil 4:6 says *Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.*

When you are in your valley remember that as the area of prayer advances, that of care in the valley recedes. So when in the dark valley simply pray and ask Jesus to hold your hand and together with him keep on walking

C. Remember There are No Accidents

Humans are the only creatures in nature that fight nature's ebb and flow. We dislike darkness so much that we create cities full of lights so that we don't have to experience darkness if we don't want to. But the darkness between days, those winter seasons, those floods and storms are all part of the circle of life. They teach us things.

D. But above all, keep on keeping on

Keep on trusting, keep on watching your step along the valley floor, keep holding on to the hand that holds onto yours. But above all Keep on Keeping on

Learn to humbly submit to the problems of life. They will come! Just remember that He is still God in the valleys as well as on the mountains!

- As you walk alone why not just sing this song by Tracy Dartt to yourself. It goes like this

Life is easy when you're up on the mountain
And you've got peace of mind like you've never known.
But then things change and you're down in the valley.
Don't lose faith for you're never alone.

For the God on the mountain is still God in the valley.
When things go wrong, He'll make it right.
And the God of the good times
is still God in the bad times.
The God of the day is still God in the night.

You talk of faith when you're up on the mountain.
Oh but the talk comes easy when life's at its best.
But it's down in the valley of trials and temptation
That's when faith is really put to the test.

For the God on the mountain is still God in the valley.
When things go wrong, He'll make it right.
And the God of the good times
is still God in the bad times.
The God of the day is still God in the night.
Yes, the God of the day is still God in the night.

Well, a look at the inevitable valleys we will encounter on life's journey may not be pleasant but they are beatable if we keep in mind some of the things we have looked today. Again, don't forget, whatever the valley, where ever it is don't forget to keep on keeping on.

In closing, if you have never met the "Master Architect" of the universe, including all of its valleys, and would like to meet him so you can find help in the valleys you face on your life journey as well as avoiding eternal separation for him when your life journey is over, consider carefully the following.

Realize you are a sinner Romans 3:23

Understand that the payday for sin is death or eternal conscious separation from God.
Romans 6:23a

Know that there is a way of escape for you. Romans 6:23b and John 1:12

Desire to escape and pray this or a similar prayer.

"Dear God, I know I am a sinner. I am truly sorry for my sins, and I confess them all to You [name them]. Lord Jesus, forgive all my sins and come into my heart as my Saviour and Lord. I receive You right now. Help me from this time forward to live for You. Thank You for hearing and answering my prayer. In Jesus' name. Amen."

On the _____ day of _____ I became a Christian by inviting Jesus Christ into my life to forgive my sin.

Signed: _____

If you have further questions or have chosen to do this, be sure to let us know so we can help you, pray for you and encourage you in your new life.

You can reach us at lapeerchurch@gmail.com Subject line: (Salvation)