

When Tragedy Strikes

The burden of tragedies in life often presses us so heavily that we are given to doubt. One of the arrows in Satan's quiver, which he often hurls at the Christian heart, is faith-crushing calamity. However, God has not left us to languish, wavering in uncertainty. There are at least two lines of defense in the holy arsenal to which we have access as soldiers of Christ.

First, there is the confidence in knowing that our God is not a spiteful God, anticipating our every sin so as to exercise His divine condemnation in human suffering. Sin has consequences but too often, and wrongly, God is given credit for catastrophes. As Jeremiah looked over a decimated Jerusalem, in his Lamentations, he still had the presence of mind to state, *"For he doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men"* (Lamentations 3:33). God is not willing that any should perish but is longsuffering (2 Peter 3:9). He finds no glee in the death of the wicked (Ezekiel 33:11). He calls us to holy living and trust in His providential care (Romans 8:28).

Second, we have as protector and comforter, the mind of God in His revelation, the Bible. *"Above all* (Paul said), *taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked"* (Ephesians 6:16). Attacks on our faith are not unusual, but when we are in the weakened state of sorrow, it is often more than difficult to maintain spiritual strength. We don't see the big picture like God does. We don't know the eternal mind of God in His purposes. And, we certainly cannot transcend time to see the end of what may for the moment seem to be disaster. However, God knows, He cares, and He will see us through.

Thus Paul, amidst persecutions and trials, could say, *"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord"* (Romans 8:38-39). When tragedy strikes, trust in God.