

Fanning it into Flame
Sunday, February 28, 2010
I'm in over my head!

That feeling of being in over your head happens to everybody at one time or another. If you can relate this message is for you. I have four steps that will help bring about a solution.

First, that feeling comes from initially feeling like everything is dependent on you. The **good news** is that if you're in a right relationship with God (you've made Jesus the Lord of your life) it's **not** all dependent on you. The **bad news** is that we forget the good news and dwell upon the enormity of the task or problem leaving us with that anxious feeling.

Secondly, we must go back to the good news that you're not alone and meditate on it. The Bible tells us in 1 Peter 5:7 ***Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.*** God is love and he loves us. It's his nature. He tells us that he will not leave us or forsake us.

The Apostle Paul tells us in Titus 3:4-6 ***But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, 5 he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, 6 whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior.***(NIV) This should be a great comfort to those who think God is sitting in Heaven with a judicial scale measuring our good works against our bad ones in order to determine whether he'll listen to you or not.

Paul goes on to say in Romans 8:31b-32

If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all-- how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? Then a few verses later he asks, ***"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?"*** And then answers that in verses 37-39 with: ***"No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39 neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."***

Thirdly, reflect on **the reason God made you**. This is so important because we can lose sight of our true identity when being bombarded with the mass media, anti-supernatural bias, and preoccupation with self that has risen to historic levels in our society.

Colossians 1:16 ***For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.*** (NIV) God created us to be in relationship with him and with one another. Jesus said these two sides of relationship were essential. God created us to be a family. He created us male and female in order to paint the picture of his loving and creative nature when the union of the two in marriage would produce children to love.

Ephesians 5 elaborates that this husband/wife relationship was to be emblematic of Christ's love for the church. The Apostle Paul tells us in Romans 8:28, 29 that God works through everything that happens to us for our good, not that he causes them, but he will use them for our good with the goal of conforming us into the likeness of Jesus Christ. Christian marriages are failing today because people are **not** looking at the purpose for which they've been created. The subtlety of this deceptive spirit gets people to entertain thoughts contrary to God's word by thinking their life could be happier going down a different path. While God does want us to be happy, he disciplines us to see that genuine happiness is a byproduct of a relationship with him, not having our fantasies fulfilled. Why not believe God for a miracle for their marriages to become what God intended them to be? Nothing is impossible!

Fourthly, take a proactive stand based upon his word seen in steps 1, 2, and 3 and pray in faith. Many times Christians don't want to ask for prayer. They think that their prayers alone are enough. This is certainly the case for a lot, but for many issues you need support. There is power in our unity. Paul thanked the Christians in 2Corinthians 1 for their prayers knowing that there was power in that to accomplish his deliverance. Don't think that things will just work out by themselves because God knows our needs. We must pray. It is faith that engages God in the process through prayer. While God tells us, ***"Before you called I answered,"*** that did not mean that prayer was not needed. We needed to **CALL**. His response was based on our prayer of faith. God wants us to participate in advancing his Kingdom and partner with him in our daily walk. Let's make every day count, by walking in a close relationship with God through our faith in Jesus Christ and with one another as the body he intended us to be.

The following are very powerful scriptures that support this fourth point. Read on...

Mark 11:22-25

22 "Have faith in God," Jesus answered. 23 "I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. 24 **Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.** 25 And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins." (NIV *emphasis added*)

Matthew 7:7-11

7 "**Ask and it will be given to you;** seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.

8 For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

9 "Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? 10 Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? 11 If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him! (NIV *emphasis added*)

Matt 18:18-20

18 "I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. 19 **Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. 20 For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.**" (NIV *emphasis added*)

John 14:12-14

12 I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. 13 And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. 14 **You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.** (NIV *emphasis added*)

John 15:5-8

5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; **apart from me you can do nothing.** 6 If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. 7 If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. 8 This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. (NIV *emphasis added*)

I John 5:14-15

14 This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. 15 And if we know that he hears us-- whatever we ask-- we know that we have what we asked of him. (NIV)

James 1:5-8

5 If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. 6 But when he asks, **he must believe and not doubt**, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. 7 That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; 8 he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does. (NIV *emphasis added*)

Hebrews 10:23-25

23 Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. 24 And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. 25 **Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing**, but let us encourage one another-- and all the more as you see the Day approaching. (NIV *emphasis added*)