

## When you are in a financial or career crises...

By Dave Kahle

Thanks for sharing some of the difficulties you are facing right now. I consider it an honor and a blessing to be able to listen to you, and to offer some insights from my experience.

There have been four times in my career when I faced insurmountable obstacles, and a bleak situation, when I didn't know how I was going to make grocery money, much less the house payment. Looking back, I could clearly identify the beginning and end to those periods of trial. The first one lasted six months, the second two years, the third two months, and the fourth lasted about two and a half years.

In every case, after the fact, I was able to look back and make some observations. Here's what I saw.

1. God saw me through every one of these bleak experiences.

Financially, the money always came in -- many times in ways that I would never have expected. An insurance refund from a policy I had forgotten about, for example, or a sale made from an unexpected source, discovering some cash I had set aside and forgotten about earlier, etc. In even the darkest of these times, the family always had food, clothes, and a place to stay. That's not to say that I was enjoying the kind of income I wanted. Quite the contrary. In several of these situations, I had no income.

Emotionally and spiritually, He would bring me into contact with other people whose presence and words were encouraging and supportive. Many times, they didn't even know it, and generally had no idea of what an impact a casual comment may have had on me.

2. In every case, He used the experience to do a work *in* me, as well as *around* me.

This is one of the reasons why the apostle said, "*Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds,*" (James 1: 1-3) God is working on us through these adverse circumstances. In my case, I have become much less independent, much more depended on Him, mindful of Him, and more humble (understanding of course, that there is a whole lot more progress to be made...) In other words, He has used these circumstances to move me and mold me more and more into the kind of person He wants me to be.

In recent years, I have come to see this is the ultimate purpose for these times of difficulty.

3. In every case, the position I was in, on the other side of what Oz Hillman calls the desert experiences, was better than that which I left.

In every case, my influence increased, I was able to develop additional skills and competencies that served me well, my sense of fulfillment in the job increased, and my income grew as well.

4. In every case, there was a period of time when I could do nothing but wait on the Lord.

I'm a type A personality, as I suspect you may be. For us, it is extremely hard to do nothing, to just trust in this God who we don't see and sometimes question if He is even there. Yet, in every one of these experiences, a certain portion of the time required that I do nothing but wait on Him.

5. In every case, I had to pro-actively work to attain the new situation.

In other words, God didn't cause someone out of the blue to call me and offer me a new job. But, He did prompt me to respond to an ad in the newspaper, equip me with the words to say in the interview, show me how to follow up and eventually land the new job. In my experience, He has never just handed something to me, but has, instead, lead me to seek and acquire it.

Every new and better situation was a result of Him leading me, step by step, into the new situation. I had to respond and act.

6. In every case, after the fact, I was glad I had gone through it.

Not that I wanted it, nor that I enjoyed it. Quite the contrary. I'd be really happy if I never have to go through another one again. But, I recognize that my personal situation improved, my relationship with God improved, and I grew significantly spiritually.

So, as a veteran of these wars, I'm going to offer some specific advice.

1. Put God first.

If you can, start the day with a time of prayer and reading the scriptures. If you can't do it the first thing, make sure that you work specific time with God into your day.

I have always had a difficult time keeping my mind focused early in the morning. In recent times, I've gotten into the practice of putting on a pot of coffee and then taking a 30 - 45 minute walk. In my walk, I talk to God. Later, in the course of the day, I make a time to dip into His word.

## 2. Seek out positive supportive people.

You'll need people around you more than you think. I found a local chapter of CBMC, and treated our weekly prayer breakfasts as a support group. I never found much support from the local church, but was able to come across Christians in the workplace who understood. A regular lunch or coffee with a Christian friend can work wonders for your state of mind.

This is not a time to be a lone ranger. Send me an email, and I'll put you into contact with a fellow Christian sales person who has committed to praying for you and supporting you.

## 3. Exercise.

I know, you are thinking "Where did that come from?" Exercise keeps you thinking correctly, helps to defeat depression, and gives you energy. Those are all things you need.

Plus, in a time when nothing is going well for you, and you are doubting your abilities to do anything, exercise gives you a feeling of accomplishment and a sense of success, if only in small bits.

## 4. Be especially open to new ideas, new people, and new circumstances.

The breakthrough will most likely not come through people and things that you have known and done in the past. Rather, it is often someone you don't yet know, and some thing you have not yet done. Be open to the new things flitting about your life.

## 5. Look internally.

Remember, God is using this time to do a work in you. Ask God to show you how He wants you to change. See if you can't identify the work He is doing in you, and join in the process.

6. Finally, know that God loves you, that He is aware of your circumstances, that He is working in the world to achieve His purpose, and that you have a significant part to play in that great world-wide, multi-generational work.

At some point, you'll be on the other side of this, and you'll look back and be thankful for it.