

Introduction: God uses “resistance” to build our spiritual muscles. As we face troubles and hardships in life, we are forced to seek help from God in different ways.

There are three things we can take into consideration:

I. Troubles motivate us to seek God.

God will use whatever it takes to guide, teach and correct us. Even unpleasant things. That’s exactly what happened to Martha in John chapter 11. Her brother Lazarus had passed away, and she told Jesus in verse 21, “*Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.*” Can you hear her sorrow in those words?

“Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life; the one who believes in Me will live, even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?” She said to Him, “Yes, Lord; I have come to believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, *and He who comes into the world.*” (verse 23-27 NASB)

II. God’s Timing is Always Perfect.

Jesus had eaten with Lazarus and his sisters Mary and Martha several times. In other words, Jesus knew this family.

When Jesus received a word that his friend was sick, one would expect Jesus to heal Lazarus from a distance. Or one might think Jesus would go to Bethany and heal Lazarus there. But Jesus didn’t do any of this. He waited. And Mary and Martha also had to wait.

The Lord does not always do things for us when we want Him to, but His timing is always perfect.

III. The Secret of staying strong is Prayer

“Therefore, let all who are faithful offer PRAYER to you; at a time of distress, the rush of mighty waters shall not reach them. You are a hiding place for me; you preserve me from trouble; you surround me with glad cries of deliverance. I will instruct you and teach you the way you should go; I will counsel you with my eye upon you. Do not be like a horse or a mule, without understanding, whose temper must be curbed with bit and bridle, else it will not stay near you.” (Psalm32:6-9).

1. “You preserve me from trouble.” The word for “trouble” means, “a tight place.”
 - a. That could be facing enmity.
 - b. That could be adversity.
 - c. That could be facing extreme stress and pressure to do things. May things you don’t feel comfortable doing.
 - d. That could be anything that squashes you between a rock and a hard place.
2. He is to determine what is ahead of us and to guide us to it.
We do not know about the future. There may be stormy days ahead.

“In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” John 16:33 (NIV).

Conclusion: Where are you having troubles today?

Troubles motivate us to seek God, God’s timing is the best and the secret of staying strong is prayer.