



The weekly newsletter article of Parkside Chapel

LIFE NEWS



OVERWHELMED

by Donna Romer, Communications

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I stood in our backyard, overwhelmed by the destruction. Replacing a leach system was not only a huge expense, but the project left our backyard in ruin. I wanted to cry as I looked at the amount of work it would take to re-level the ground, replace dozens of rock pavers, re-seed grass, shovel piles of dirt, and pull some stubborn weeds that now littered the landscape. My husband's shoulder was injured, and hiring someone to do this project was out of the question, so I performed a full-on whining concert, reminding God that I was no spring chicken (which, by the way, I don't think He was in the dark about)!

In the middle of my pity party, the Holy Spirit gave me a spiritual tap on the shoulder, "Just break the project into manageable parts and do a little every day." With that Holy encouragement, I picked up the shovel and began leveling the compressed dirt. The next thing I knew, I had replaced a few pavers. After work the next day, I repeated the process, and within a few weeks, over 90 pavers were back in place, sand was poured, and flowers were replanted. Step by step... day by day.

You would think I had learned this life lesson because I've been there before ... many times! Years earlier, while backpacking in the Sierras, I stood on a rocky trail, staring up at a mountain pass, feeling overwhelmed by the miles in front of me. My muscles ached. I was tired and sweaty as my backpack bore down on my shoulders. Exhausted, I couldn't see how I would make it. The switchbacks lining the mountainside above me were daunting, and as I kept my focus on the mountain, I became overwhelmed. With each step, I became more

discouraged, and I soon realized the only way I would make it to the summit was to keep my eyes focused on the trail markers and watch each step. I changed my focus, kept my eyes peeled on the trail, and we reached the summit... one step at a time!

Many years ago, a close friend of mine walked through an excruciating life crisis. I would ask her how she was doing, and her response was, "This minute, I'm doing fine." It wasn't even "today I'm doing fine"... she had broken her life down into minutes. Ultimately, God gave her strength for each day, a minute at a time.

Everyone faces mountains in life. In 1858, Fanny Crosby penned the lyrics to her best-known hymn, "Day by Day." She was just 26 years old and traveling with her Father off the coast of Sweden when the ship suddenly lurched. Before her eyes, her Father pitched overboard and drowned. Grief-stricken, she returned home alone and processed her sorrow through scripture and writing poetry. Seven years later, "Day by Day" was published and eventually became one of her most well-known hymns,

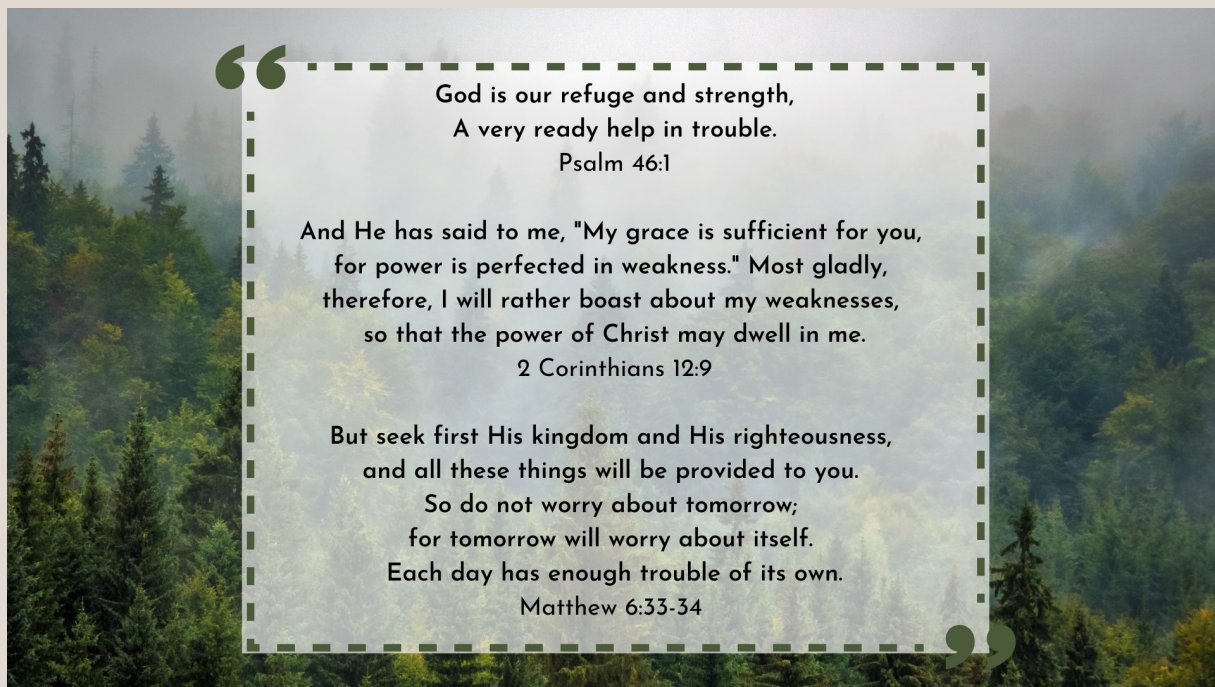
“ *Day by day, and with each passing moment,
Strength I find to meet my trials here;
Trusting in my Father's wise bestowment,
I've no cause for worry or for fear.
He, whose heart is kind beyond all measure,
Gives unto each day what He deems best,
Lovingly its part of pain and pleasure,
Mingling toil with peace and rest.* ”

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So often, the mountains before us seem insurmountable. Sometimes those mountains are the spiritual work God needs to do in us. Sometimes we face life-altering situations that we can't find our way through, and all we can see are mountains shrouded by ominous clouds in the distance. It may be a financial crisis, looming projects, family issues, health problems, or the overwhelming shroud of grief.

I've hiked each of those mountains at one time or another, and my husband and I face some of those now. In these moments, the Holy Spirit reminds me not to look at the mountain in front of me but to take the trail step by step, minute by minute, with eyes focused on a loving God who marks my trail and has all things under His control.

Breath by breath ... minute by minute... day by day... He is faithful.



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