

THOSE CRAZY STORMS

By Sharon Lobbs Garner

What a wind storm we had last week with branches falling and debris being tossed about, pulling down wires and felling trees, robbing many of power. Storms of nature are events completely out of our control. They just happen....without our say so and sometimes unexpectedly. The storms of life can also come unexpectedly. Gusts of situations that knock the breath out of us, tossing us in all directions, pulling down our faith and hope, felling our false expectations and robbing us of power. Power to overcome.

As Christians, we do not live in a bubble. Life happens. Winds blow. Storms come. It's what we do in those times that matters the most. It's said that storms make you stronger. I never liked hearing that phrase. But I can say now....it's true.....they do. I am a witness.

What can we do when those "gusts" come in our direction:

- Face it head on – deal with it
- Keep our confidence in God
- Express everything to God – leaving nothing out
- Don't allow our emotions to dictate
- Let God's promises dictate
- We need to spiral up and not spiral down

In our own strength, we lack sufficient resources and abilities to meet life's "gusts" that blow into our life. When we try to tackle these storms independent of God, we will surely fail and come up short. I have been that person – the one who tries to figure it out and come up with a plan instead of setting my face to seek the Lord. I lose sleep, my energy is depleted, my mind rehearses the situation, worrying ensues and the "what if's" start to overwhelm me wave upon wave.

What did Jehoshaphat do when he heard that a great army was coming against him? Talk about a storm brewing – this was a big one coming against Judah and Jerusalem. The Bible says in 2 Chronicles 20:3 "Then Jehoshaphat was afraid and set his face to seek the Lord."

Looking at Jehoshaphat's Response

He did not allow the feeling of fear to control him. We can feel fear, which is natural, and not be afraid. There is no need for us to hang onto our fear for God will fight for us.

He set his mind to seek the Lord. We can have a predetermined plan when trouble comes of what we will do. A plan already set in place. Jehoshaphat already had a predetermined plan to seek the Lord. He turned his attention in the Lord's direction. So can we.

He rehearsed God's faithfulness and His promises (vs.6-9). It is vital that we rehearse the times God has brought us through. Rehearse the strength of our God.

He had a position of worship (vs.18-19). Worship invites all the resources of Heaven to stand by our side. We are worshiping a God who can do something about the situation. When our posture is worship, God moves, as stated in vs 22, "the Lord set an ambush against...."

There you have it. He faced his greatest fear, expressed everything to God, kept his confidence, not letting his emotions dictate but God's promises dictate, and he spiraled up and not down. Victory came.

I am still in the process of learning this response. I haven't arrived. There are times when I forget to seek the Lord and His strength, to seek His face first, but they are fewer and farther between. I am learning to rehearse what 2 Chronicles says: "This is what the Lord says to you (put your name here), 'do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army. For the battle is not yours, but God's.'"