



STAYING STRONG

June 2024

HAPPY FATHER'S DAY

This Month's Topics:

"Potato, Egg or Coffee Bean?"

"Why Did God Let This Happen?"

Self-Care Corner

Random Holidays You May Not Know About

The Importance of Staying Connected

Bible Verse:

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make straight your paths."

Proverbs 3:5-6

POTATO, EGG, OR COFFEE BEAN?

Once upon a time, a daughter complained to her father that her life was miserable and that she didn't know how she was going to make it. She was tired of fighting and struggling all the time. It seemed just as one problem was solved, another one soon followed.

Her father, a chef, took her to the kitchen. He filled three pots with water and placed each on a high fire. Once the three pots began to boil, he placed potatoes in one pot, eggs in the second pot, and ground coffee beans in the third pot. He let them sit and boil, without saying a word to his daughter. The daughter moaned and impatiently waited, wondering what he was doing. After twenty minutes he turned off the burners. He took the potatoes out of the pot and placed them in a bowl. He pulled the boiled eggs out and placed them in a bowl. He then ladled the coffee out and placed it in a cup. Turning to her he asked, "Daughter, what do you see?"

"Potatoes, eggs, and coffee," she hastily replied.

"Look closer," he said, "and touch the potatoes." She did and noted that they were soft. He then asked her to take an egg and break it. After pulling off the shell, she observed the hard-boiled egg. Finally, he asked her to sip the coffee. Its rich aroma brought a smile to her face. "Father, what does this mean?" she asked.

He then explained that the potatoes, the eggs, and coffee beans had each faced the same adversity – the boiling water. However, each one reacted differently. The potato went in strong, hard, and unrelenting, but in boiling water, it became soft and weak. The egg was fragile, with the thin outer shell protecting its liquid interior until it was put in the boiling water. Then the inside of the egg became hard.

However, the ground coffee beans were unique. After they were exposed to the boiling water, they changed the water and created something new.

Sometimes terrible things happen. Marriages fail. Family members get sick. Friends are no longer there. Like you, I have had my share of tough times, but I have found that there are some simple things that have been useful to help me through them.

1. This too shall pass. Think back to what you have gone through so far and realize that you are strong and you will get through this as well.
2. You are not alone. Realize that other people are experiencing the same or similar thing. There are people that you can talk to that can share their journey and help you through yours.
3. Check your thoughts. It is easy to become full of negative thoughts. Don't allow them to consume you. Pick something good to focus on instead.
4. Move your body. When things are tough, we tend to introvert and are no longer motivated to go about our day. This is the time to make sure you get outside, get fresh air, move your body, dance in your room, or do anything that gets you moving. It helps get rid of the extra cortisol that causes stress and anxiety.
5. Finally, take one day at a time. It can be overwhelming to think about the future. Just get through today.

There will always be tough times. What you need to ask yourself is when adversity knocks on your door, how will you respond? Are you a potato, an egg, or a coffee bean?

Tracy Fink / Forsyth Family Magazine



WHY DID GOD LET THIS HAPPEN?

When you believe in God, it can be hard to come to terms with the fact that He has allowed adversity to come into your life or your loved ones. In the book *"If God is So Good, Why Do I Hurt So Bad?"* author David Biebel says there are two truths suffering people have to reconcile:

Sometimes life is agony and Our loving God is in control.

Think about it.

If God knows everything, this trial did not surprise Him.

If God sees everything, He saw the bad news coming.

If God has power over everything, He could have fixed it.

But He didn't.

He didn't prevent you or your loved one from getting cancer, dementia, ALS or a multitude of other afflictions. God didn't thwart the divorce, the job loss, the infidelity, the pay cut, the addiction, the waywardness, or scores of other struggles. Our loving Heavenly Father didn't stop them from happening to you or your loved one.

And so, we ask, or maybe we even scream . . . Why did God let this happen?

My unsatisfying, but honest response is . . . *I don't know.*

Yes, I know that "good" sometimes can come from "bad," but the journey through the bad can be, oh, so difficult.

And yet the reality is that God's Word never promises He will stop all bad things from happening to us.

On the contrary, it promises us that He is prepared for each battle and will equip us, too. *The Message* Bible paraphrases 2 Corinthians 4:8-9 this way:

"We've been surrounded and battered by troubles, but we're not demoralized; we're not sure what to do, but we know that God knows what to do; we've been spiritually terrorized, But God hasn't left our side; we've been thrown down, but we haven't broken."

When you're being battered and thrown down, if you are like me, you just want God to take it away and give back your happy life!

I pray you are encouraged by knowing that your or your loved one's diagnosis / crisis / problem has not taken God by surprise. He is in control and knows how to equip you for it. And if He doesn't remove the pain – physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual – please believe He can redeem it.

You may feel as if you can't even face the situation, but I guarantee you that our God can!

Lynn Eib / *When God & Cancer Meet*

Easter is a reminder that God is in the business of awakening hope in the hearts of people who feel hopeless.

He does this in ways that only he can do. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the truth of the Gospel and the resurrection hope.



SELF-CARE CORNER

The goal of self-care is reducing stress and feeling recharged. You have to make that a priority so that you can be your best self. When you take care of yourself, you are more prepared to help others in your life and find joy doing it. St. Paul gives a great formula for reducing stress and recharging in Philippians 4:6-7. He writes: "Do not be anxious about anything but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

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Set a Positive Morning Intention

Would you like to start your days with more energy and purpose? Try setting the tone with a positive intention.

It's a phrase you repeat to yourself first thing in the morning. You can use the same one each day – or change it up.

It can be anything that matters to you. Close our eyes, breathe deeply and repeat a phrase like:

- ★ I am ready for today's challenges with God's help.
- ★ Praise God from whom all blessings flow!
- ★ Thanks to God's love, my worries do not control me.
- ★ I am grateful for this beautiful God-given day.

Always remember:

Self-care is not selfish. You cannot serve from an empty vessel.

Finding and affirming your true value, worth, and wealth is a matter of self-care which allows us to express compassion, loving kindness, and true generosity to others. And where does this love come from? "We love because He first loved us." 1 John 4:19. From this love that God has for us flows our love for God, our love for others, and our love for ourselves.

The thankful heart opens our eyes to a multitude of blessings that continually surround us.

RANDOM HOLIDAYS YOU MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT Have a laugh!

June

- 1st Say Something Nice Day
- 18th International Picnic Day
- 20th Daylight Appreciation Day
- 26th National Chocolate Pudding Day
- 28th INTERNATIONAL CAPS LOCK DAY

THE IMPORTANCE OF STAYING CONNECTED

Isolation and loneliness are not just sad situations. They have been shown to increase the likelihood of dementia, depression, and heart disease in older adults. Even early death. Below are some ideas to boost connection. Some require technology. Others do not. Here are some ways that we can help each other:

- **Video Calls.**
- **Old-fashioned snail mail.**
- **Telephone calls with an activity.**
- **Explore reminiscence activities.**
- **Consider a telephone check-in service.**
- **Communicate with neighbors, friends and relatives. Don't wait for calls to come to you, pick up that phone and call someone! Our phones *have* become one of our best friends!**