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## WHEN LIFE IS NOT FAIR

By Tanya Curren

Many things in my life have been unfair. It wasn't fair that I fractured vertebrae in my lower back in high school and had to go to classes and lean back in a lawn chair. (Isn't that quite the visual for a high school student? You can imagine the feedback I received from that experience!) It wasn't fair that my child was taken from my arms and placed in the Neo-natal Intensive Care Unit at a different hospital less than 24 hours after his birth. And it really wasn't fair when the actions of someone else completely and totally altered the course of my life in 2004 when staph bacteria was blown into my lungs during a "routine" procedure.

I have many more experiences I could share in my life that are not fair. Perhaps you have many as well. If you are in a place in your life right now where you are dealing with frustration, anger, guilt, shame or pain over unfair situations happening to you or those you love, may these words to encourage you today. **Life is definitely not always fair, but God is definitely always good.**

This can be such a difficult concept to grasp when you are walking through the trials of hell, can't it? If someone had come up to me while I was weeping as Pierce was being placed in the incubator breathing machine and told me that God is good and this would work out in a great way, I'm sure I would have wanted to punch them in the face! But, what was comforting was when people prayed for him, encouraged us and let us know they were there for us as new parents.

This is an important point to remember if you know someone who is experiencing an unfair situation in their life right now. Ask God to give you the words and wisdom to encourage and comfort them. There are many Scriptures you can pray and use to offer them strength. Psalm 46:1 says, "*God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.*" Isaiah 49:13 says, "*...For the Lord comforts His people and will have compassion on the afflicted ones.*" And Isaiah 51:12 says, "*I, even I, am He who comforts you.*"

It has been very difficult for me to watch those I love experience great hardships and unfairness in their lives. My best friend and her two small children were thrown out of their house and forced to start over because of an abusive husband. I have a family member who was blind sided because of an affair. I have a good friend who is still experiencing excruciating physical pain after a string of surgeries that haven't worked the way the doctors planned. I know one mother who just lost her only son in a car accident, and another whose 4 week old baby just died. I know countless people who deal with physical, emotional trauma on a daily basis and have to use all kinds of prescriptions and medical treatments just to get through the day.

Is this fair? No, and honestly it pains my heart to watch them experience such hardships. Believe me, it has kept my prayer life very busy as I go before God on their behalf and intercede for their breakthrough. As you pray for someone you love, you will find that your prayer life increases as well. You will become more compassionate towards others, and your spiritual ears will become more in tune with the Holy Spirit as He

gives you the right words at the right time that will bring them comfort.

I want to encourage you right now if *you* are the one facing all of the unfairness that life brings. Perhaps you have been wrongly accused, fired from a job you loved, cheated on, stolen from, or lied to, or treated badly by a family member child. Maybe you are facing extreme financial problems or lack in an important area of your life. Or, maybe you are facing physical, mental, emotional or financial difficulties as a result of someone else's actions. These are serious and extremely painful things, and it is ok to be angry. God gave us the emotion of anger, and it is healthy to work through those feelings to get to a point of surrender and healing.

After my coma experience, I was angry and bitter of the unexpected and painful turn my life had taken. Understandably, I was having a hard time forgiving and understanding why God would allow this to happen to me. I went to a psychologist who helped me understand that there is a big difference between staying bitter versus experiencing righteous anger. Bitterness eats away at your soul and prevents you from moving forward. Being righteously angry means that you have a right to be angry about what happened to you, but you work through those feelings to get to a place of forgiveness, acceptance and peace.

It is unrealistic to think that you are never going to get angry as a Christian. In fact, I believe that it is unhealthy to put such an unrealistic expectation upon yourself! You are holding yourself to some really high standards if you think you should never get angry about the injustices that occur in this world. If you are feeling guilty about having the emotion of anger, remember that the Bible is full of stories of people who were righteously angry. If you've ever read the story of Jesus entering the temple and going to town with a whip on the crooked people exchanging money in the temple, then you know that Jesus even experienced righteous anger! (John 2:15)

It is normal to feel angry when life is unfair! But, just because it is normal does not mean that we can sin in our anger. The Bible reminds us in Ephesians 4:26 that, "*in your anger do not sin.*" What we are to do with this powerful emotion is to work through it, tell God exactly how we feel, and be open to His healing power. If you feel like this isn't happening quickly enough for you, don't worry. Each one of us is different, and we all deal with pain, anger and trauma in different ways. You should never compare yourself to someone else or think that you have to get over something in someone else's time frame. (Trust me, as soon as you start comparing your life to someone else's, guilt will come flying in, and this is not what God wants for you!)

As I have drawn closer to Christ, I have found some helpful ways to release anger as I experience unfair things in life.

### **I DO NOT FOCUS ON WHAT ISN'T FAIR**

I could spend all day focusing on the negative outcomes in life, but I choose to always try to find the positive. So, instead of being angry or bitter about all of the physical trauma I have endured in my life, I have used it to have extreme compassion for others who are hurting. The pain I have experienced has made me very sensitive to others and has allowed me to have discernment and wisdom as I minister to someone who is hurting. Instead of looking at how much money we spent trying to keep me alive and healthy, I looked at it as a way that God has disciplined me and taught me to be frugal. I have learned the true value of money. There is a lot that it can buy, but SO much more that it can't.

I have allowed these and other realizations and lessons to mold me, shape me and develop me into the

person I am today. I know that I will face more unfair situations in life. God didn't promise me a fair life. In fact, His Word says in John 16:33 that, "*In this world you will have trouble.*" But do you know what the next sentence says? "*But take heart! I have overcome the world.*" AMEN! Even though I know I will face trouble, I know that no matter what I face, I will come out on the other side stronger, wiser and closer to God. This is exactly what will happen to you as you look for the positive parts of what you are experiencing!

### **I KNOW THAT LIFE ISN'T FAIR, BUT GOD IS ALWAYS GOOD**

While this is still hard to recognize in the face of a tragedy, I understand the concept at my core. It may take me a while to find the good in a horrible situation, but as I pray and look for God's goodness, I am able to see how He can work through anything. If you take an experience from your life and ask God to show you how He can make something good and powerful come from it, He will! It may not be what you expected, planned or hoped for, but He can take anything and everything that has happened to you and use it for so many great purposes.

Again, tell Him how you feel. He's a BIG God who can handle any emotion you feel. Talk to Him, write to Him, draw it out – whatever your style or whatever it is you need to do to express yourself; share your every emotion with the One who created you and loves you far more than you can fathom. After you have shared and released your anger and frustrations, ask God to show you how to heal. Ask Him to help you release what you're holding onto, and ask Him to help you find forgiveness and peace in the midst of what you are facing. Your surrender to Him is such a beautiful thing! I promise that our loving and amazing God will take all that you give Him and will show you how to release, how to forgive and how to heal. The process can feel slow and unending at times, but never give up.

There is beauty in the process of releasing everything to God. I have found that it can come in "spurts" or cycles. Sometimes I've felt like I was releasing and learning a lot, and other times I've felt completely stagnant and unable to find the point in anything. Whether you find your peace and acceptance quickly or slowly, never give up! It is worth having, and your life is worth the time and energy that it takes to pursue God's peace at any cost. Every time I focus on God's goodness versus the unfair experiences life brings, I am more at peace and am able to face the situation. As you do the same, God will bring you the peace that your heart desires.

### **I TURN TO THE WORD OF GOD FOR ANSWERS**

Our God is a God of justice, and this brings me great comfort! When life is so unfair, I search my Bible for stories of how God came through for others during their times of heartache. It truly does empower me to read how God protected His children, took care of their enemies and brought great purpose from all of the pain they experienced. Of course, the stories do remind me that God allows us to walk through terrible trials, and He is not solely interested in us living a posh, luxurious life. But even as I read the stories of others experiencing difficulties, I can always find where God was faithful and used their life's pain in many amazing ways.

While I can find so many stories that bring me comfort, there are still ones that are hard for me to understand. Let me be completely honest with you here. Probably one of the most difficult stories for me to comprehend in the Old Testament is the story of Job. As a mother, I cannot fathom losing my child and everything I own in one day, only to then experience the horrific physical sickness and ailments that Job did. I also cannot comprehend how it would feel to lose my child, yet be able to have more and still feel blessed. My son, Pierce, is irreplaceable to me and even if I could have more children, nothing could replace him as a unique individual

and my precious son. Job lost all 10 of his children and at the end of the story we read how God gives him 10 more. While having other children must have been a wonderful blessing to Job and his wife, it didn't replace their original children whom they loved dearly.

As I look at this story and can see how the things that happened to Job were unfair, the reality is that Job gave His life to God and offered to be used as God allowed. This is exactly what we do as Christians today. So, even though this story is difficult to grasp, I find meaning and purpose in what God allowed. When we accept Jesus into our heart as our Savior, we are pledging our allegiance and love for Him. We are saying that we are His vessel, and our life is His to use, guide and reach others. Truly, we are no longer our own. Therefore, we have to be willing to walk the road that God guides us down. Will it be easy? No, probably not. But, don't get discouraged, my friend! I would rather walk down a rocky, narrow, scary, glass-shard road with God holding me ANY DAY than I would choose a soft, glorious safe-looking path without Him! When God is guiding you, holding you and giving you your life's directions as He whispers in your ear, NOTHING can stop you or keep you from finding peace and happiness. NOTHING!

I want to leave you with Psalm 20 today. This was David's prayer as he put his faith and confidence in God before he went into battle. This is an excellent prayer to pray if you feel like your life is a battlefield and you are facing unfair situations. I pray this prayer in agreement with you and your life as you stand strong no matter what you face. May God bless you as you daily live your life for Him!

In Him,

*Tanya*

Psalm 20:1-8 (NIV)

*"May the Lord answer you when you are in distress; may the name of the God of Jacob protect you. May He send you help from the sanctuary and grant you support from Zion. May He remember all your sacrifices and accept your burnt offerings. May He give you the desire of your heart and make all your plans succeed. We will shout for joy when you are victorious and will lift up our banners in the Name of our God. May the Lord grant all your requests. Now I know that the Lord saves His anointed; he answers him from His holy Heaven with the saving power of His right hand. Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the Name of the Lord our God. They are brought to their knees and fall, but we rise up and stand firm."*



Tanya Curren is the co-founder of Boundless Limits International, a ministry of encouragement and empowerment. She is also the co-author of **ON COURSE: Strategies For Successful Living** and the **ON COURSE Life Application Study Guide**, which has been distributed worldwide. In 2004 Tanya Curren was in a life threatening coma for 8 days as a deadly infection ravaged her body. Given two hours to live, she survived only to face the ordeal of a painful three year recovery. She is the author of **Broken Places**, **The Proverbs Devotion Guide**, **Embracing Change & Conflict**, and several other CD's. In her conferences and seminars, Tanya shares with others the life-lessons she learned through her journey to restoration. Tanya travels and speaks at local, regional and international venues, and is passionate about guiding others to have a personal, real relationship with Jesus Christ.