



Spirit of Grace

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Herald

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Fast, Scary Decisions

Very little good is said about haste in the Bible. Haste is generally an expression of the lack of faith. In Isaiah we read: "Behold, I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation; whoever believes will not act hastily" (Isaiah 28:16). Rushed, frazzled, nervous people are not people of faith. When you always have to act immediately, you reveal an illusion that everything depends upon you. "If I don't act soon, my whole life will fall apart. If I don't move now, I lose everything." Such an attitude suggests you have zero faith that God has the ability to hold your blessing in place for you. You think that blessing is so fragile, so fleeting, and so transitory that only by the greatest haste will you be able to lay hold of it. Otherwise it will soon be gone and you'll be out of luck. God says, "whoever believes will not act hastily."

I have learned to be comfortable allowing God time to deal with me and with my circumstances before making major decisions. If, after a lengthy period and much prayer, I still feel the need to make the decision which I wanted from the beginning, I generally feel that I can decide and act in confidence, know-

ing that the matter has been thoroughly committed to the Lord. On the other hand, there are those special and fearful times when we do not have the luxury of taking a lot of time to weigh our options, pray for weeks or months, and methodically choose a course of action. The pressure is on, and it is absolutely clear that if we do not act soon, we will lose out big time. In these cases, not to decide is to decide. When your car is stuck on the train track, and the train is bearing down upon you with a certain collision no more than one minute away, there is no time for lengthy reflection and long prayers, to determine whether God wants you to keep on attempting to start your car, or jump out of the car and let the car perish alone. Not to decide is to decide.

These situations usually come up for me in those "perfect storms," when it feels as though all of Satan's energy has been unleashed in my direction. The foul breath of the prince of dark-



ness seems to saturate my life and circumstances, and discouragement is piled upon despair, piled upon confusion, piled upon bewilderment. And to make matters worse, I know that something will have to be done quickly or I am in serious trouble. As the disciples awoke the Lord Jesus with the desperate cry, "Lord, save us. We are perishing!", so I long to go to Him with the

same words. But where can he be found?

Having gone through a few of these spiritual and emotional hurricanes, I have learned two things. First, it helps to have built a strong relationship with the Lord in the pleasant and more care-free times. Major storms are not the ideal conditions for folks to go out and try to lay spiritual foundations in their lives. But if you have been seeking the Lord in those seasons when the sun shone brightly and the wind was nothing more than a gentle balm, chances are you will have developed some pretty good spiritual instincts which will be invaluable during the typhoons, when the winds of the evil one are tearing down major structures and ripping up trees without solid root systems.

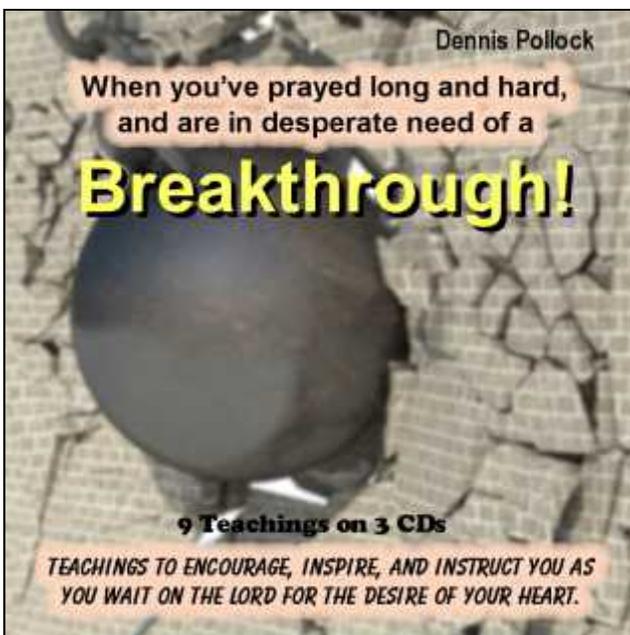
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Secondly I have learned that whether we have months or seconds to make decisions that may significantly affect our lives, God can be trusted. Jesus is our good Shepherd, and that means that He does not run from His post when the winds start whipping up. Even when we are forced to make decisions when we are not totally convinced they are the right ones, Christ is still overseeing the entire process, and watching tenderly over His nervous children. What's more, God has seen your storm coming long before you ever spotted it, and has made provisions for your survival and victory from the foundation of the world. C. S. Lewis dealt with this subject in his book, *Mere Christianity*:

Almost certainly God is not in Time. His life doesn't consist of moments following one another. If a million people are praying to Him at ten-thirty tonight, He hasn't got to listen to them all in that one little snippet which we call "ten-thirty." Ten-thirty, and every other moment from the beginning to the end of the world, is always the Present for Him. If you like to put it that way, He has infinity in which to listen to the split second of prayer put up by a pilot as his plane crashes in flames.

By all means take your time making decisions when you possibly can. But in those rare moments where a quick and scary decision must be made, put your trust in God your Father, and in your good Shepherd, the Lord Jesus. You may be rushed and confused, but They never are!

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"Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but when the desire comes, it is a tree of life" (Proverbs 13:12).