

What to do when life is too much

*"But my God shall supply all your need
according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."*

Philippians 4:19 (KJV)

As long as we are living in this world we all shall find ourselves running out of resources of one sort or another. Some exhaust their health, others find they do not have money to complete their education, some find that their patience comes to an end and they disown a rebellious child. In so many ways and for so many reasons we discover ourselves bankrupt.

Occasionally a person can be found who decides they are sufficient for anything life offers. Such a man was a poet named William Ernest Henley (1849-1903). He suffered as a child from disease and had his right leg amputated as a means of saving his life. As an adult he spent years in hospital and one of his children, a 5 year old girl, passed away. So Henley's life was filled with sorrow upon sorrow. Yet for all the tragedy that life brought him, he was a truly resilient man.

The poem for which Henley is best known was titled *Invictus*. In Latin the word means "undefeated". A verse in the poem goes as follows:

In the fell clutch
of circumstance
I have not winced
nor cried aloud.

Under the bludgeonings
of chance
My head is bloody,
but unbowed.

It is a dramatic comment on his determination not to give in to the problems of life but keep his head high regardless of how much life "hammers" him, or what cruel circumstance grabs hold of him. We may admire Henley's courage and determination, but wonder at his ability to keep to his commitment to never to cry out in pain.

Another poet who suffered as much as Henley was Annie Johnson Flint. She suffered greatly in life. First her mother died when she was 3, her father shortly after. For a couple of years she and her little sister lived with a woman who did not want her.

She found refuge in a Christian home for her teen years but the adoptive parents died when she was a young adult, shortly after she discovered that she had debilitating arthritis.

By the time she was in her early 20's she was becoming dependent on others because of the progressive arthritis. The pain of her disease coupled with her financial dependence

on others at times made her adult life desperate. She eked out a living through writing poetry and making greeting cards for sale. One verse of a poem of hers goes as follows:

When we have exhausted our
store of endurance,
When our strength has failed
ere the day is half done,
When we reach the end of our
hoarded resources
Our Father's full giving is only
begun.

Those who call their Creator "Father" are the ones who benefit from the kindness and strength of God. Only when we come to the end of ourselves and accept the truth that we are in great need of God's forgiveness are we positioned to receive from Him all that is needed to live here in this tired old world.

Your Creator offers you all that you need for time and eternity. Come and receive from Him today. Be an Annie Johnson Flint not a William Ernest Henley. You shall never regret it.

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