

## The Difference

My life has been under some pretty major reconstruction lately. I could make an elaborate bulleted list for you with the dates and changes in my life in an effort to make your head spin the way that mine has been, but I'll spare you.

During this time, there have been an unbelievable amount of unknowns. I have found myself repeating a few scripture verses and hymns to help refocus when I'm feeling especially stressed out. Plenty of "I Am Trusting You, Lord Jesus," "I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord" (Jeremiah 29:11), and a whole, whole lot of "lead me to the rock that is higher than I" (Psalm 61:1-3).

**Hear my cry, O God;  
listen to my prayer.  
From the ends of the earth I call to you,  
I call as my heart grows faint;  
lead me to the rock that is higher than I.  
For you have been my refuge,  
a strong tower against the foe.  
I long to dwell in your tent forever  
and take refuge in the shelter of your wings.  
For you, God, have heard my vows;  
you have given me the heritage of those who fear your name. Psalm 61:1-5**

As I've reflected on that picture of being led to that higher rock, I've spent a lot of time thinking about those people who don't see that refuge in their lives.

Even unbelievers know that life isn't going to be perfect, that "in this world they will have trouble" (John 16:33). Try to imagine life with that alone. The idea that this life is all there is, and you have one shot at health, wealth, and happiness is harrowing for more than one reason. Not only are you missing the entirety of all the incredible joy and perfection that comes after death, but it makes this life a whole lot harder too!

It sure feels like the devil works harder on the lives of Christians, making it at least seemingly less pleasant than that of unbelievers. Even the lost, though, are wandering through life's journey on a battle ground. The difference is that they don't know. They aren't holding the map that says, "This is (I am) the way", so they're trying to find it on their own. When bullets are flying and they feel under attack on this journey, it's so often unexpected. Not only are they unsure of which way to run, but they haven't put on the breastplate of righteousness, and they don't even see the sword of the Spirit. Never mind knowing where to turn for true and lasting refuge.

Life in this world is hard. But take heart!

**I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world. John 16:33**

Even on my most exhausted, defeated, despairing nights, I have the comfort that I'm just a stranger here. This is all temporary. There is so much more. Rather than feeling so disappointed and frustrated that I'm missing out on valuable time here in my one shot at health, wealth, and happiness, that I'm being robbed of peace in this life, I know that this life is never where I was supposed to look for peace in the first place.

**You will keep in perfect peace**

**those whose minds are steadfast,  
because they trust in you.**

**Trust in the Lord forever,**

**for the Lord, the Lord himself, is the Rock eternal. Isaiah 26:3-4**

Even in your darkest, hardest moments, you are so, so blessed. Not only were you warned about troubles you would face, clued in on your purpose here, and equipped for what was to come, you know where you're going.

I'll say it again: Life in this world is hard. It's hard for us, and it's hard for unbelievers. The difference in this life is great. The difference after this life, though, is the point of the matter. We will continue to face hardships, but at the end we rest in perfect, perfect joy and peace. Even those who seem to evade life's onslaught are to be mourned if they aren't heavenward bound.

You've heard the quote by Ian Maclaren (or Plato, depending who you ask) "Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle," but I believe our calling goes beyond kindness. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Imitate Christ. Dear sisters, we are in this war together, and not all people are heavenward bound. Becoming an ally in a battle may help determine where someone finds herself at the end of the war.

**Prayer Suggestions:**

- **Pray that God lead you to his Word and promises every day – whether busy or blessed or burdensome.**
- **Pray that you can accept the good and the bad, knowing that God will use all things for your good.**
- **Pray that God will help you see past your strife and to look to the cross where Jesus laid his life down for you.**

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