

One Day at a Time

To get some exercise, my spouse and I take morning walks – hikes, really, considering the distance, the brisk pace, and the elevation gain. Where our route is smooth and easy, I can just enjoy the fresh air and scenery as we go along. Other places, though, where the path is rough or steep, I have to work harder and watch my step, lest I trip and fall. Life is like that, isn't it? Some stretches we can practically coast through, just enjoying the good things along the way. At other times, the going gets really tough. Then we have to deal with hazards and hardships, and it's easy to grow weary or become overwhelmed, especially if we start worrying about what new difficulty might be just around the corner.

“So do not be anxious then, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘With what shall we clothe ourselves?’ ...for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not be anxious for tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.” (Matthew 6:31-34)

When we first started our morning hikes, the biggest hill on our route seemed almost insurmountable. Standing at the bottom and looking at how far I had to climb, I wasn't sure I'd make it. Focusing on that giant obstacle ahead was a mistake, I soon discovered. I did much better if I looked only at the next several steps in front of me, which I knew I could manage. Then, if I could occupy my brain with something productive – prayer, plans, a song – I reached the top of the hill before I knew it.

If you're travelling a smooth path right now, praise God for it. If, however, the route is rough, remember that God is walking that rocky road with you. His grace is sufficient to carry you through your current circumstances and weakness (2 Cor. 12:9). Focus not on the giant mountain in your way but on your destination – the kingdom of God – just putting one foot in front of the other. And a song wouldn't hurt either, like this one maybe:

One day at a time, sweet Jesus. That's all I'm asking of You. Just give me the strength to do every day what I have to do. Yesterday's gone, sweet Jesus, and tomorrow may never be mine. Lord help me today, show me the way, one day at a time. (One Day at a Time, Wilkin/Kristofferson)

S. Johnson