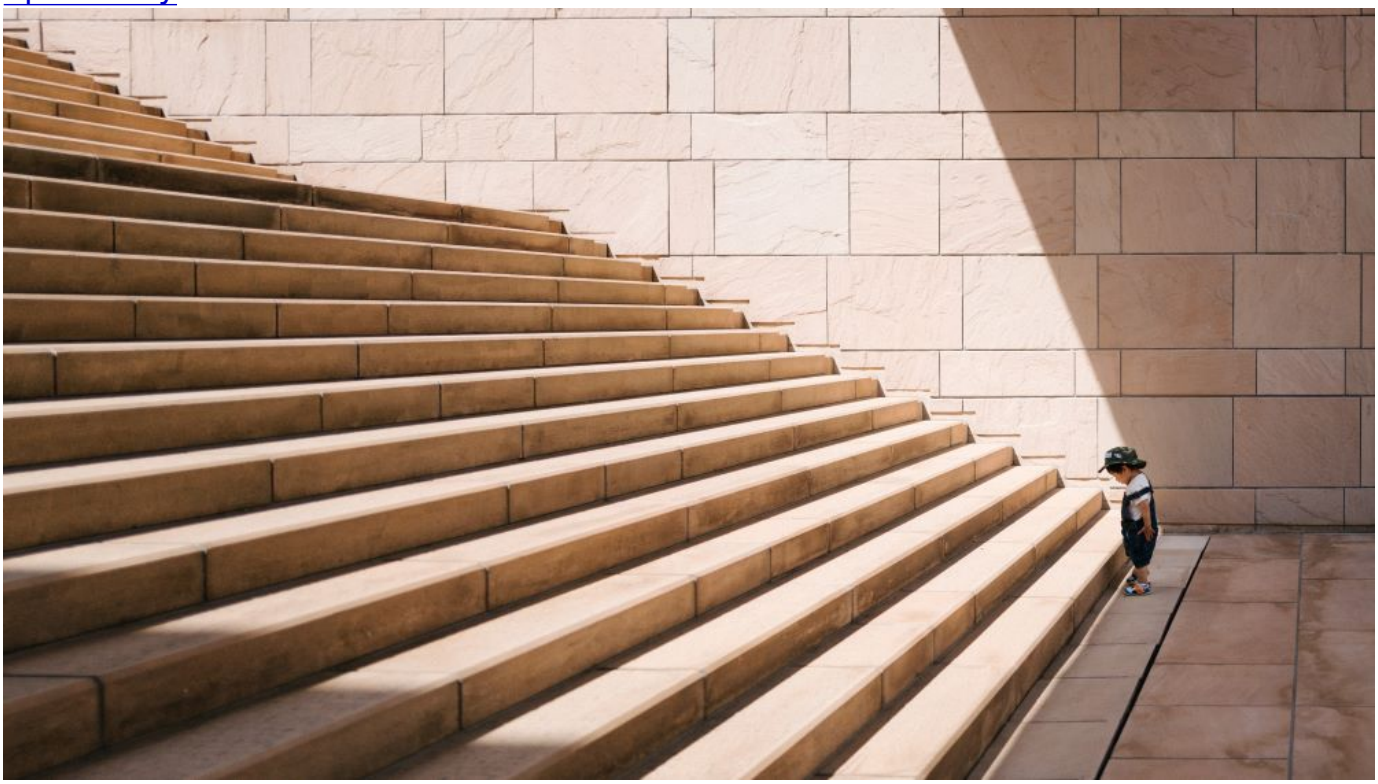
Columns
Spirituality



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by Nancy Watenga

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In life each one of us gets to a point when we wish we were not going through our experiences. True, life can be hard at times — maybe most of the time! As someone

observed, all of us come to a "Red Sea" place in life — a time when we need someone to part the sea for us!

When your health is not good, you long for good health of mind, body and soul. When you have tried many opportunities and none seems to be right for you, you long for tranquility. Sometimes your trusted friends — because of their limited human nature — take to their heels, leaving you lonely and desolate. At a time like this you may wish that you could do without friends. Other circumstances fill you with fear and anxiety, especially when you do not know your fate. Need and poverty increase your fear and dampen your spirit.

We all dread pain, but unfortunately it comes to all of us. This can result from fear, poverty, confusion, loneliness or ill health. At these moments we are in a learning session. This I consider a preparation to embrace change.

Whether you are venturing into multi-level marketing — which makes you shiver with fear when you have to call that prospective client — or you are struggling to master speaking in public, you undergo a certain discomfort that fills you with nostalgia for the status quo. Again, when you dare to upgrade your business, or when you are dealing with a difficult teen, the pain of seeing failure is excruciating.

Nelson Mandela, the first president of South Africa, who fought apartheid and spent 27 years in jail, must have prayed at some point that the good Lord would take the cup of suffering from him. Nevertheless, he went through it all, and a great African nationalist leader was born.

These words, "Never wish life were easier, wish you were better," were first said by Jim Rohn, one of my favorite American authors and motivational speakers. A bit of his story that interested me was how Jim Rohn dropped out of college when he was 25 years old, married, and began working. I watched an educational video in which he described his humble beginning as a farmer's son. He shared a story about the time he could not afford $200 for nuts a small girl with marketing skills was selling him.

After the girl left, Jim closed the door and made up his mind: Never again would he feel helplessness. Thanks to his mentor Earl Shoaff, a motivational student, he became a good student. and the rest is history. He began self-study, how to think big and grow rich, and he did become rich. In a nutshell, Jim felt that when a person

goes through pain, difficult times and challenges, the result is that one becomes a better, wiser and stronger human being!

In my view, to become better means acquiring more skills, more knowledge and more experience. To become wiser means learning from mistakes and the mistakes of others, while to become stronger means to keep on regardless of the challenges!

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Consequently, a heart that withstands pain, suffering and hard times develops patience with others and with themself. This person remains humble in the season of plenty and does not attribute their success to their own might, better strategies or aggressiveness in achieving their goals. The mind and heart learn to stretch beyond the ordinary.

This could be achieved through changing a mindset, embracing a sound philosophy of life in day-to-day activities, consistently setting goals, and ensuring that they are achieved. We read in Genesis 1:28 about God saying that humans should "be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it." And in John 15:1, Jesus tells us that he is the true vine and his father is the vine grower. Every branch that does not bear fruit is destroyed. The Word is challenging each one of us to become productive. In other words, each human person is expected to have self-awareness, and develop his/her talents and gifts in service to the human race.

These references show that it is God's plan for each one of us to grow, yield plenty and with grateful hearts give back to society. To do so — like gold that passes through fire in order to shine — one needs to put up with several challenges: only then will life turn you into a better person, a wiser person and a strong person. This is what I call a character-building session. As you pursue your goals, what you become in the process is greater than the end product.

So I think Jim Rohn was right when he said: "Never wish life were easier, wish you were better."

One of the most difficult times the world ever encountered was the COVID pandemic. Literally everything came to a standstill. The owner of the universe spoke louder than ever before in our time! A few lessons I learned from this period include:

- We need each other, so we have to co-exist.
- No system can defeat the system of the Creator of the universe.
- Each of us lives at the mercy of God.

God allows us to be in darkness so he can show us that He is the Light. When His Son felt desolate in the garden of Gethsemane, God sent Him an angel to console and empower Him. This, I believe He does with each soul that He created!