

"WHO CARES"

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There have constantly been times in human history when either the national affairs of a country or the personal affairs of an individual have been discouraging and difficult. When disappointments come, then morale becomes low and we often get the feeling that nobody cares. It is fatally easy at such times to give up, to either blame ourselves—and to feel that all the world is against us and that there is nothing left to hope for.

We are actually no different in our feelings from the vast majority of mankind. It is worthwhile noting that everybody gets 'our' sort of feeling sometime. We are not exceptions in our feelings. I find I am just the same as everybody else, though fortunately not everybody feels 'down' all at the same time. So it is good to look at our own situation from a distance; to take as far as possible an objective view of ourselves, to realise that we are passing through a time of discouragement such as everyone else has passed through or will pass through sometimes;—and it is surprising, too, how our health affects not only our appetite but also our view of life's situations. An imbalance in our metabolism can give us a pessimistic view of life.

But, there is something far more objective that has to be noted. History has again and again taught us that the God of history is a God who cares. His purposes involve nations, and despite the bewildering kaleidoscope of events on a national scale, His purposes involve people. By this I mean not only V.I.P.'s, but ordinary people. Not merely some ordinary people, but all ordinary people. In the face of What we have discovered about God, there is no-one who can truthfully say "I don't count!", "Nobody cares". We may feel that way. It may seem that way. But it is not that way.

How do I know this? I see it in history. Out of every terrible chapter in this world's history something that turns to the Good. Out of a war comes the development of penicillin. Out of slavery comes a sense of justice and compassion. Out of a rail disaster come better rules for public safety. I also read it in scripture, "The Lord disciplines him whom He loves"; "Except a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit." "We know that in everything God works for good with those who Love Him, who are called according to His purpose." "I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content." I sense it, too, in my personal experiences. At times when I have felt discouraged, other people have already written things to encourage me. At times when I have been in need, I come through them to find God's provision. When I have to help those who are discouraged, I can pass on a lesson from my own times of discouragement.

Think of the truths in the following lines which from part of a hymn written by Adelaide Anne Procter:—

I thank thee, too, that Thou has made joy to abound,
So many gentle thoughts and deeds circling us round,
That in the darkest spot of earth some love is found.
I thank Thee more that all our joy is touched with pain,
That shadows fall on brightest hours, that thorns remain,
So that earth's bliss may be our guide, and not our chain.
For Thou who knowest, Lord, how soon our weak heart clings,
Hast given us joys tender and true, and yet with wings,
So that we see, gleaming on high, diviner things.