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THE HALLWAY OF ONE THOUSAND DOORS

By Richard & Tanya Curren

My heart is beating fast in my chest. The feeling of panic is about to overtake me as I enter the hallway with one thousand doors. My answer lies behind one of the doors, but which one? I am frustrated, overwhelmed, confused and greatly concerned that I will run out of time before I open the right one. Why does this have to be so difficult? Why can't there be a clear answer with a glowing light over the door I'm supposed to open? Why does God have to be so mysterious that I can never seem to figure Him out? I've done all of the right things and made the right choices to get here, yet my answer still feels a million miles away.

The sweat is dripping off my face as I quickly start turning knobs – desperately trying to push open the doors as I twist and turn. I'm moving as fast as I can, yet it is never fast enough. The pressure is building and time is running out. I don't have time to waste! Life is too short and I have important things to do. And, these aren't even selfish desires! How am I supposed to pour into the lives of others, impact my family and be a world changer when I can't even figure out what my next steps are going to be? Where, oh where are my answers?

Doesn't God hear my cry? Are my prayers not good enough? Am I not holy or worthy enough to have my prayers answered like other people's? Why is this frustration being allowed in my life? Can't God see that I'm willing and have submitted myself fully to Him? WHAT IS THE PROBLEM??? I feel like there's a big disconnect between the promises in the Bible and the reality of what's happening in my life. I keep telling God that this is so stupid, yet I know He and His ways are not.

This is taking too long! I keep moving down the hall, yet seem to make zero headway. The doors keep coming. I can't even see the end. I'm starting to hyperventilate. It feels like my heart is going to explode through my skin, and yet somewhere in my brain I know that it's not. I wish I could just force myself to calm down but I can't. I keep reaching for that peace that passes all understanding that my Bible promises, but it's not filling me like I need it to. Is that my fault? Have I done something to block my blessings? I've repented, prayed, cried out, praised, worshiped, called on God daily and done everything else I can possibly think of to be in His presence and favor. My Bible also says that His grace is sufficient for me, but this doesn't feel sufficient.

No, I'm not starving in the street. So I know I am greatly blessed compared to so many. But doesn't God care about my individual needs and what I'm going through? Do I always have to compare myself to the direst of situations just to feel better about what I'm facing? Must I always say, "Well, things could be worse?" This hallway is making me feel claustrophobic. I think I'm going to have a panic attack. I look up and down the hall and feel so very defeated. There's no way I'm going to get through all of these doors. What if the right door for me is the very last one I reach? What if I'm too late? I will have wasted so much time, energy and emotion on this process. WHY IS GOD DOING THIS TO ME???

Does any of this sound familiar? If so, you are not alone. This has described exactly how we have both felt many times in our lives, and we know so many who feel exactly like this right now. Feeling like this does not make you a bad person, weak Christian or unstable human being. Feeling like this means that you are willing to express the emotions you are battling as you are searching for God's answers. If you do feel like you're stuck in a hallway with one thousand doors, we want to encourage you today with several principles and truths that will encourage you as you wait.

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

Satan always loves to isolate us and make us feel very vulnerable, alienated and like we're the only one going through something so extremely difficult. Yet many very strong believers have faced a crisis of faith and times of great frustration and discouragement. C.S. Lewis lost his wife to cancer and called out to God but got no reply or relief. He asked, "What can this mean? Why is He so present a commander in our time of prosperity and so very absent a help in time of trouble?" Does this statement mean that C.S. Lewis lost his faith and wasn't a good Christian? No, of course not. It means that this feeling of being lost or forgotten by God is something anyone can feel as they are facing a tragedy or extended season of difficulty throughout life. Remember that you are not alone in your hallway, waiting room or season. Look for others with whom you identify and glean from their experiences and lessons learned. It will encourage and strengthen you as you wait.

YOUR HALLWAY DOES NOT DEFINE YOU

Just like what you do for a living does not define the entire essence of who you are, your hallway – your time of waiting throughout your difficult season – does not define who you are. You are worth far more than your difficulties! If you allow this time in your life to shape your self-worth, then you will most likely become very self-critical and focus on the negatives instead of focusing on your accomplishments. Don't allow any experience in your life to be the be-all-end-all of how you view yourself.

SEEK THE REVELATION OF GOD'S REASONS

Although it may feel like it, your hallway is not endless and the doors are not there to frustrate you, embarrass you or break your spirit. The doors are there for God to use that time to teach

you so many things like patience, valuable life-lessons, learning how to fully lean on Him and so much more. The reality is that sometimes in life you are in the hallway with one thousand doors and there are no nearby windows for you to escape! So, while you're there, stop and ask God to reveal His reasons for this time.

Don't focus on asking WHY. God may never reveal every reason why He allows certain things. Focus instead on KNOWING HIM. As you turn your focus more to Him and what you can learn while you are in your hall of waiting, it will take your attention away from the human emotions you are feeling. Will it take away everything you're feeling? No, most likely not. God has never done that for us. You'll still have to daily speak and think positively, focus on the good that's happening in your life and continue to praise God through whatever you're facing. Honestly, overcoming the negative thoughts, fear and panic is usually the hardest part. If you focus on the what-if's and the unknown, fear will wash over you in a second. The way to win the battle in your hallway is to daily, hourly and sometimes moment-by-moment focus on God's will for your life and practice knowing Him throughout everything you face.

KEEP MOVING DOWN THE HALL

Never give up trying. It can be exhausting and seem endless, but the persistent ALWAYS succeed. Always. When we give our lives to the Lord, we are giving ourselves fully, therefore we are His. It is no longer our right to give up until He tells us to and releases us. Think about that concept for a moment. Giving yourself fully to your Creator means that you give up certain "rights" that you had before.

Before you became a Christian, you chose to do things your way. But when you accept Christ into your life and heart, you allow Him to reign and guide you in all you do. By continuing to deny yourself the right to give up, you are choosing to actively continue seeking His will in all you do. This choice brings you ultimate freedom and peace! Don't ever look at it as a loss, but always look at it as a gain. You are gaining the power and presence of the Holy Spirit to move through you and lead you to the right door. Keep moving and never give up!

CHOOSE TO HANDLE THIS HALLWAY DIFFERENTLY

Let's say that you completely identify with the person above. At the end of the day, the reality is that the outcome is the same. They are still in the same hallway, yet they are exhausted, emotionally drained, covered in sweat and panicked from a lack of answers. What if that person had chosen to react differently? Would it have changed the outcome? No. The doors would still remain shut and the answers would not be different. However, if this person decided to breathe slowly, rebuke any negative thoughts, focus on the positive aspects of learning while waiting and chose to praise God even though this didn't make sense, they would be much calmer, more focused and have energy to continue down the hallway tomorrow.

Do you see the difference? Both faced the same challenges and neither one received the

answers they desired. Yet, one person ended the day with a totally different outlook than the other. This is such a huge key to your peace! You may not be able to change the outcome of a situation in your time or your way, but you can control how you react to it. Never underestimate the power of your reactions! They trickle out into other areas of your life and into your family. When you are at peace, your family is at peace. When you display the confidence of Christ, it changes others around you. The next time you face a difficult situation or find yourself in a long, dismal hallway, try applying this principle. You will be very pleased with the different outlook it brings you!

KNOW THAT THE RIGHT DOOR WILL OPEN AT THE PERFECT TIME

When we are weary, we forget that there is an end in sight. We especially forget this if we have been in a difficult season or drought for a time longer than an actual season! Satan always tells you that things will never change & that you will end in defeat. What you must remember is that the right door for you WILL open at the perfect time. You will not be in your hallway forever.

If you are experiencing an almost deafening silence as you desperately want to hear from God, remember this powerful quote from My Utmost For His Highest, written by Oswald Chambers: “When you cannot hear God, you will find that He has trusted you in the most intimate way possible - with absolute silence, not a silence of despair, but one of pleasure, because He saw that you could withstand an even bigger revelation.” Another powerful quote of his is, “When you are in the dark, listen, and God will give you a very precious message.” Amen. Experiencing a time of silence can be so hard, but remember that your options are not limited and your time is not running out. Listen for your precious messages from the Lord and allow the silence to bring you closer to Him.

In His Love,
Rick & Tanya

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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