

IN EXCELSIS DEO

ADVENT 2024

Tuesday, December 17

Read: Job 33:29-33

Think back to a time where you experienced stress, condemnation, anger, or fear. Think back to a time when you experienced pain. Think back to a time when you felt alone.

Everyone has endured these emotions. Hardships like these are a part of life! And while it may be hard to get through those times, it is important to remember that the Lord has a plan.

Job 33 reminds us that God communicates with us in many ways. Affliction is one of them. The troubles we face on a daily basis can serve as a reminder to trust in God. He knows what he is doing; he is testing our faith.

These struggles may not always come from God, but they can always bring us closer to him. Over the past few months, I have struggled with self-image and confidence. I often think that I'm not pretty enough, smart enough, talented enough, or good enough. I will beat myself up if I'm not perfect. I still do this on a regular basis, but not as severely as I did. This is because I turned to God to help. I started completing weekly devotionals that taught me to see myself through his image, trust in his plan, ask for and accept forgiveness, and forgive myself. I started to pray more and remember to include him in all aspects of my life, not just at church. My personal struggles helped to improve my relationship with God.

Next time you feel stressed, condemned, angry, scared, hurt, or alone-pray! Use those feelings as motivation. Pray for them! Ask questions, ask for understanding, ask for forgiveness. If you don't know what to say, wait for a sign to tell you that it's ok. He will show you one with time. Use your hardship to drive you to become closer to the Lord!

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