

ORIENTED

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Back before we were even married, Brandon and I went to an amusement park for a date. Upon completion of one of the more exuberant roller coasters, I turned to him and said, "Man! That was awesome! Except that crazy tunnel..." to which he looked at me blankly and asked what I was talking about. "Hon, there was no tunnel." Yes. Yes there was. I insisted. We were both so resolutely sure that we agreed to get back on the ride and go again to prove our truth. The ride jerked us up and around, and then abruptly backwards... when the outer edges of my vision started to darken. While I never lost consciousness, I was left in total darkness until my sight was slowly restored in the coming minutes. Brandon watched me shake my head and open and close my eyes, trying to shake off the "tunnel" I had so certainly seen on our first trip. I was disoriented.

And rollercoasters aside, don't we know this feeling? That sense of, "***I was counting on something, and now I'm trying to get my footing back.***" Like when you're underwater and can't sense up from down, but you know you need oxygen. And the reason this is so scary, is because just as I shook my head to gain my vision, don't we scramble for surety? To see what we can't see? Understand what we don't have vision for? To grope for solid ground? Don't we sense the surroundings to learn what ledge will hold

the weight of our hopes?

Opportunity

We don't even have to be in a full on crisis for that to happen. There can simply exist a circumstance which creates *opportunity*. An opportunity for the enemy to insert a question. Or a fear. Or a sense of insecurity or overwhelm.

I was driving the other day, and wrestling down a fear that seemed to surface and nearly strangle. When I prayed, "God, I just need to hear some truth!" *And my phone rang*. It was a dear friend who happened to catch me just before an emotional collapse, and do you know what she said when I asked her thoughts on what I was grappling with? "That does not sound like the Emily I know. That sounds like a fear inserted by the enemy." She reminded me that only days before my house had flooded, and while I shrugged it off as "not an eternal thing," she dignified the fact that it was my family's safe place. "It's like you were given a right hook that disoriented you, and the enemy of our hearts loves to get you like that so that while you're trying to get your footing back, he can deal you an uppercut. So... let me speak some truth into you right now that you need some help seeing." And she did. For the next 20 minutes she did. And she prayed. And when I got off the phone I was a new person.

What did you notice?

I noticed that when I asked God for help, for someone to speak some truth, that's exactly what happened. **Prayer is extremely reorienting.**

I noticed that **a friend who will speak truth can be extremely reorienting**. That there are times when our vision needs to be restored and our people can see things we can't.

I noticed that **opportunity seems to beget opportunity, and it's worth assessing the ways to stand firm** and counter the uppercut when even slight challenges interrupt our lives.

So, let's be a people who know how to orient our hearts and stand firm. Let's be noticers, let's be strategic, because we have access to the one who makes us able to stand.