

REFERENCE POINT

SEPTEMBER 2020

What If

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. (Psalm 121:1 KJV)

I spent most of the spring and summer months working from home except a few “in office” days. I normally spend several summer weeks in other places. With those events cancelled or moved online, I began to get “cabin fever.” As a single person, I saw mostly myself, my three cats, and the view from my home. With a vacation out of the question, a day trip where safe social distances could be maintained offered a solution. Last week I fueled my car and drove to Asheville, about 90 minutes away. I stopped at a fast food chicken restaurant for a “picnic lunch” and headed north on the Blue Ridge Parkway. As I stopped at the first overlook, I marveled at the breathtaking scene before me. As I pondered events necessitating my need to get away, I realized God brought me to this place to remind me to lift my eyes to Him. The previous week, library colleagues and faculty members questioned what we would do if students returned to campus with the present virus spread level, I told them we “trust in God.” However, God knew I needed a fresh reminder in my own life of this simple truth. The panorama before me was soothing to both my eyes and to my spirit.

At this point we do not know what fall will bring to our campuses. Uncertainty abounds. *What if* enrollment is down? Will I be laid off? How will I pay my bills and stay insured if this happens? *What if* a COVID-19 outbreak occurs on campus? Will we be forced to shut down? Will classes move online? What does that mean for my job?

What if students do not adapt to online reference models? How can I provide the help they need while protecting others and myself? *What if* I contract COVID-19? Who will care for my cats and me if I become too ill to care for myself? *What if* I cannot spend Thanksgiving and/or Christmas with my family? I do not want to spend holidays alone. While I do not know these questions’ answers, I know to look to God, the source of my strength.

I encourage you to lift your eyes to God when the overwhelming “what if” questions begin to crowd your mind. Say a prayer! God is listening. He is ready to help us. When a student or colleague shares a burden, encourage them to take it to the Lord and “leave it there.” If the “what if” scenario happens, remember God is faithful and will supply your needs. “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.” (Psalm 46:1, KJV)

Oh, what peace we often forfeit,
Oh, what needless pain we bear,
All because we do not carry
Everything to God in prayer.
(Joseph Scriven, “What a Friend We Have in Jesus,” public domain)



—Lori Thornton

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