

apr 1

shake it off and step up

"the way of life winds upward for the wise, that he may turn away from hell below." prov 15:24

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a parable is told of a farmer who owned an old mule. the mule fell into the farmer's well. the farmer heard the mule 'braying' - or - whatever mules do when they fall into wells.

after carefully assessing the situation, the farmer sympathized with the mule, but decided that neither the mule nor the well was worth the trouble of saving. instead, he called his neighbors together and told them what had happened and enlisted them to help haul dirt to bury the old mule in the well and put him out of his misery.

initially, the old mule was hysterical! but as the farmer and his neighbors continued shoveling and the dirt hit his back a thought struck him. it suddenly dawned on him that every time a shovel load of dirt landed on his back. he should shake it off and step up. This he did, blow after blow.

"shake it off and step up - shake it off and step up - shake it off and step up!" he repeated to encourage himself. no matter how painful the blows, or distressing the situation seemed the old mule fought "panic" and just kept right on shaking it off and

stepping up!

you're right! it wasn't long before the old mule, battered and exhausted, stepped triumphantly over the wall of that well. what seemed like it would bury him, actually blessed him, all because of the manner in which he handled his adversity.

that's life. if we face our problems and respond to them positively, and refuse to give in to panic, bitterness, or self-pity, the adversities that come along to bury us usually have within the potential to benefit and bless us.

remember that forgiveness, faith, prayer, praise and hope - all are excellent ways to "shake it off and step up out of the wells in which we find ourselves!

-- author unknown

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yes, it's upward we want to go; forward and not let ourselves be buried under the circumstances falling all around us. "forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, i press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." phil 3:13-14

well i remember a time in my life. the place i had worked at for over twenty years had to close it's doors. i had to leave and it felt like i was being forced to my family and leave home. needless to say i was apprehensive and in doubt about what the future

would hold. they had been with me through some of the crucial times of family death and stood with me.

they were wonderful people and had arranged a new place of employment to go to. that helped but the hurt still remained. not only was i leaving this wonderful family, it meant i would be leaving my adopted family. it was a hard time; for me, for them, for everyone. but true friendship never ends and we are still friends to this day. time and distance - those can only separate our physical being, never the heart. several of us are united in the family of God and that is something which can never separate us in any way.

yes, one has to shake it off but if we don't step up, if we don't keep climbing up, shaking it off will still end up with us being buried beneath the dirt and rubble. it has been said, "if you're not growing, you're dying." if you are not moving forward, you are moving backwards. God doesn't want that for any of us. whatever adverse circumstances you may now be facing - shake it off and step up. there's more in victory than we can imagine. there's life itself.