

MONDAY MANNA

17 February 2020

DENIAL - CRISIS - ACTION

By Jim Mathis

For a few years I kept noticing my blood pressure was elevating. Each time I would check it, it would be slightly higher than the time before. I always attributed this to some contributing source – too much coffee, I was tired, or some other easily explained and dismissed reason. Finally, my physician came right out and told me, “Your blood pressure is too high. I am going to put you on medication for that.” The medication worked and my blood pressure was back to a normal, healthy level. I had been in denial; the doctor forced me to admit my denial and prescribed a course of action.

Another time, my indebtedness was increasing. It started me on a slippery slope the very first time I failed to pay the entire balance on a credit card. I kept thinking I would catch up the next month, but did not. I denied this was a problem until it turned into a crisis, an amount I could no longer tolerate. I came up with a plan of action and paid off all of my debts in about the same amount of time it took to accumulate them.

I have been gaining a little weight each year of my adult life. I convinced myself this was normal and besides, I knew a lot of people who were much more overweight than I was. I also reasoned that my scales must be off, I was wearing heavy shoes, or had just consumed a large meal, and besides, I thought, my weight varies with the time of day.

Eventually I hit a number beyond my comfort zone for what I was willing to weigh. It became a personal crisis. I bought a new digital scale and started charting my weight at the same time every day; I wanted no variables that I could rationalise. Once again, I was in denial, reached a crisis of belief, and developed a plan of action.

Many years ago, I was drifting spiritually. I had gone to church as a youth, and even had a “religious experience.” I looked back at that experience, convinced I was right with God, but somehow realised I was not. Eventually, I reached a crisis of belief where I knew I was going to have to change my life. I started attending church again and joined a Bible study group. There I became aware my view of God was that of a child, a perspective I had picked up in Sunday school decades before.

After a period of deep soul-searching, I decided to become a dedicated follower of Christ – this time as an adult with a plan. Just as with my blood pressure, indebtedness and weight, I had been in denial about my lack of faith. I had a crisis of belief where I knew things had to change, and that crisis led me to a new and more mature faith in Jesus Christ.

Over the years, I have seen this same pattern played out in many other people’s lives in a wide variety of subjects. For some, their ability to live in denial is higher than others; they never seem to get to the crisis stage where they recognise the need to take action. Others confront reality and take the necessary steps before a major crisis strikes. Are there areas of your life where you are in denial? Are you heading for a crisis or should you take action now?

I would suggest you consult others for help: God, and trusted friends. *“You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you,” declares the Lord* (Jeremiah 29:13). *“A wise man has great power, and a man of knowledge increases strength; for waging war you need guidance and for victory many advisors”* (Proverbs 24:5-6).

Postal Address:

PO Box 8168,
Woolloongabba QLD 4102

ABN: 42 005 622 515

Office Address:

Suite CBMC,
Sung Do Lawyers
14 Annerley Road
Woolloongabba QLD 4102

Email:

admin@cbmcaustralia.com.au

Phone:

07 3172 9365

© 2020. Jim Mathis is a writer, photographer and small business owner in Overland Park, Kansas. His latest book The Camel and the Needle, A Christian Looks at Wealth and Money. He was formerly the executive director of CBMC in Kansas City, Kansas and Kansas City, Missouri, U.S.A.

Reflection/Discussion Questions

Have you ever had a problem, whether with indebtedness, physical health, destructive behaviour, or an issue in the workplace that you denied for a long time before taking action on it? If so, describe the problem, how it affected you, and what you ultimately did about it.

Is it possible you might still be in the denial stage of some unaddressed problems or challenges in your life? How do you think you could go about discovering there actually is a problem before it turned into a full-scale crisis?

What about your spiritual life? Do you think you are where you should be in your relationship to God? Why or why not? If you are not certain, who might you go to for counsel or advice to help you gain an honest understanding of where you are – or might not be?

Suppose you were forced to admit you were in denial about some controlling issue in your life, and it was reaching the crisis stage. Would you be willing to surrender your pride and submit to the guidance of a trusted advisor to help you in taking whatever action is necessary? Why or why not?

NOTE: If you have a Bible and would like to read more about principles it presents, consider the following passages:

Deuteronomy 5:32-33

Psalm 139:1-12,23

Proverbs 8:17, 11:14, 19:20

1 Timothy 4:7