



(Sorry for the tulips. They're not the mountains the Psalm speaks of, of course. They describe me, trying to look upward.)

## LOOKING UP

March 2015

*I lift up my eyes to the mountains—  
where does my help come from?  
My help comes from the Lord,  
the Maker of heaven and earth.  
He will not let your foot slip—  
he who watches over you will not slumber;*

Psalm 121:1-3

A friend recently pointed me to Psalm 121. "You have your head down too much. What you need to do is lift it up and get a new perspective." I didn't know whether he meant my literal head or whether he was speaking spiritually. But it didn't matter. I was being told to get a new perspective.

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How I wanted a good new perspective! A faithful, joyful looking up at things. The ability to look at everything in a positive light. Walking with my head held high instead of bent down.

My poor perspective has been the reason for problems lately. It has caused misinterpretations and misunderstandings. The result has been depression and pain. Sometimes the pain is so excruciating all I can think of is the need to escape.

I wonder. Is this common to people with depression—bipolar and otherwise?

I think it has to be so. Isn't the very nature of depression to see things negatively? And then, isn't it at all possible that we're going to take things the wrong way now and then? Yes, I think this is all part of the illness and can't be avoided until we're on our road to recovery.

But, you know, there's one thing I'm learning more and more. Although my mental health is failing me, God's love isn't.

I've reached out to a number of church friends and tried to describe the med change that is happening to me, part of a series I'll undergo. A couple of those have struggled with mental health problems of their own and understand. The others have come to listen and learn. Our church secretary passed on a message to people that I'd like prayer.

The result? People are telling me they're praying. Close friends have made it known, in no uncertain terms that I'm loved. One beautiful friend has let me know that she wants me to email her whenever I want—whenever there are things going on in my head that I need to get out.

How I appreciate knowing that I'm loved! And how this impresses on me how great God's love is!

*Thank you so much, Lord!*

All this makes me realize that even when we can't look up as much as we'd like we're still enveloped by God's love. Though we may be depressed, God is always near. Though friends won't always be available we can trust that God is there. All we need to do is talk to him like the friend He is. He will listen and he will hear—and I need to say it again—with great love for us.

And now, after considering all this and looking back at those verses from Psalm 121 that I started with, I'm finding it a bit easier to lift my eyes up. I can believe that my help will come from the Lord, wherever I'm at.

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By holding onto the knowledge of God's love, could my perspective gradually change?  
Could my depression gradually lift?

He who watches over us will not slumber.

marja