

## What's Your MO? -Ryan Parsons-

Nothing will reveal your modus operandi more than crisis.

When I say modus operandi, or MO, I am talking about more than a method of procedure. Think of it as a distinct pattern or method of operation that defines you.

One of the most embarrassing moments for me in my nursing training was an unexpected crisis that occurred in class. A beloved classmate suddenly slumped in her chair and began having a violent seizure. In that very critical moment a few of our classmates rushed to her side. I am ashamed to say it, but I froze. For so long, I had trained myself to run from crisis. Now, in an emergency, I couldn't do the very thing I wanted, with all my being, to do...help. As one of my colleagues looked up at me, my soul was seared by eyes piercing through me, revealing my inaction. It was clear that my modus operandi had to change.

Paul was writing to the Philippian Christians knowing that they too would undoubtedly face, if they hadn't already, some jail house experiences (Acts 16). In preparation for that, he gave them a guidebook on the Christian MO. As previously demonstrated by Paul and Silas, he wanted them to know that Jesus people don't freak out and run away from their faith. In times of crisis, they are to lean upon their faith.

Philippians 4: 6b

...but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

Paul gives the Philippian Christians 3 things to implement so that, when the day of trouble comes, they will shine.

First, Paul tells them to stay connected to God. Don't let yourselves start questioning where God is when times get hard. "The Lord is near" (4:4). Go ahead and talk to Him. While it may be hard to take time for an intimate personal convo with the Creator of the universe when you are bloody and hurting, it isn't so out-of-the-question when you are already accustomed to keeping in touch with Him on a regular basis.

Second, do it all "with thanksgiving." Gratitude is a game changer for the attitude. Living a thankful life, even through crisis or hardship, is sometimes way outside of our comfort zone. But, can you get to a better place than "In Christ?" I think not. The thankfulness for the redemption from sin that we have been given by the blood of Jesus should cause us to operate always out of thankfulness.

Finally, tell God what you need. We serve a God who can heal disease, release people out of prison, defeat enemies, and raise people from the dead. Rather than wait until all other options are exhausted to ask for a favor from God, go to Him first. Moreover, because of who He is, believe He can do whatever He wants according to His will. Don't sell Him short.

What's your MO? Are you connected to God, exuding thankfulness, and asking the Almighty for what you need? Never let prayer and thanksgiving become a last ditch effort. Rather, make it a vital part of your Christian modus operandi, and walk through life unafraid and completely reliant on God.