

apr 4

there is something that i feel the Lord is dealing with me about today. in myself i feel so inadequate to talk about such things and yet, i feel He is wanting me to. this is just one of those times when we may worry everything we do and say is wrong. we just have to trust Him and that He has a plan to use something to touch someone. "we walk by faith, not by sight." 2 cor 5:7 anyway, here it goes.

everyone will have storms in their life and times of testing. there will be times when we feel we are carrying the burden alone. that is only the case if we allow it to be. where are our eyes; on the situation or on our God?

do you think your problems are overwhelming and undeserved? i think of a joni eareckson, a quadriplegic for over fifty years who has authored many books and done much to reach out and share the grace of her Lord. she has not let her problems become others. instead, she has given them to God. she has said she would rather live a lifetime in her wheelchair with the Lord than on her feet without Him. let me quote her.

"He has given me a head start. for although my suffering has often felt overwhelming – as when i saw myself in that mirror – it's been God's choicest tool in making me holy. my affliction keeps purging sin and selfishness out of my heart, honing me into the picture-perfect bride. heaven is the holy habitation where i'll be presented to Jesus spotless and blameless. and my suffering is helping with that."

does suffering allow us to keep our eyes on the prize. if the several strokes that have put me also in a wheelchair were suddenly reversed, would my attention be drawn again to worldly things and off the Lord? it is certainly possible. "the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful." mark 4:19 i do not want just to be here. i want to be fruitful.

God most certainly does not put these things upon us. satan does the dirty work. He does turn them around for our good and His glory. still, narrow is the way that leads to life and few there be that find it. "we must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God." acts 14:22

sin is in the world and we are now living with it's effects. it may not be your sin causing a tragedy but someone else's. the sin of others affects us also. i may be an innocent bystander as one consumed by evil begins a shooting spree. then again, it may be my own sin. God cares more where we will spend eternity than how we spend this brief life.

i quote the apostle paul in corinthians. "deliver such a one to satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." 1 cor 5:5 i also quote the severity of our Lord. "if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire." mark 9:47

this flesh is temporary. we will someday recognize the vapor it really is. "He has made everything beautiful in its time. also He has put eternity in their hearts, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end." eccl 3:11 we must simply trust and obey.

what does it take to get one's attention? the death of one close? the restraints of one's body? we all see the death of a loved one as tragic. if they belong to the Lord, it is not their end but their beginning. have they been removed to get you out of their shadow and grow into your potential? have they finished their lap of the race and now hand the baton to you? i think of joni lamb and the daystar family. every since their father and founder graduated to heaven, the whole family has been forced into their potential.

God wants us all to reach our potential. if it takes something more, His hand is not shortened. He sees the end from the beginning; much further than we do. "He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ." phil 1:6

and in my confession of that last statement, i believe He is seeing something in what i have penned today which will touch someone or help someone with what they are currently going through. so i end with the statement i began with. "we walk by faith, not by sight." 2 cor 5:7 our temporal eyes see only to the end of this life. our faith eyes see much further. be blessed! may our faith fail not. "He knows the way that i take; when He has tested me, i shall come forth

as gold." job 23:10

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