

“Snowed Under”

Within the last two weeks, the various outlets of media have shared with the public of two tragedies of people being lost in the snow. One such tragedy involves a San Francisco man and his family, a wife, four-year old daughter, and a seven-month old daughter. This family was traveling through the upper Northwest when they were trapped on a logging road covered in snow. For over a week, this family was trapped there while waiting for rescue. Finally, this man decided to leave his car and family and go in search of help. Days passed by and there was no sign of help or the man. Finally, rescuers found this man’s pants and then the next day, found him dead in the snow. Meanwhile, his wife had been burning all sorts of items from the car, finally burning the tires in order to attract the eyes of the rescue team. This is such a tragic loss for this family: now, two little girls will have to grow up not knowing the heroic father who died trying to save his family.

When reading this story and listening to it, I cannot help but think of so many people that are in this same situation spiritually. So many people start out up the mountains before them in this life, yet when adversity gets more and more, the less and less they are able to handle it. Many people begin to be snowed under by their hatred of enemies, their love of themselves, of things and their self-serving pleasures. When life gets tough, they go out looking for rescue, yet go in all of the wrong directions.

The story continues with this man and his family. It is said that this man walked sixteen miles looking for help, eventually ending up back close to the car. However, the real tragedy is found in knowing that this man and his family could have traveled only a mile in the opposite direction and found a lodge that was closed for the season. Inside, they could have found food, warmth, a telephone, and shelter in order to weather the storm. When lost and dying in this grueling walk of life, so many of us get lost wandering around for the remainder of our lives looking for help, only to find we have wandered in vain looking for spiritual rescue. So many times, the Savior is standing just right over our shoulder. All we must do is turn around and find Him for our protection. Just as the human body is not made to withstand the harsh conditions that this man had to endure, our souls are not made to withstand the harsh conditions that lay before us by the works of that evil prince, the father of lights.

In Jesus, we will find our shelter from the storms that whirl and rage in our lives. Christians as well as non-Christians try to take on the storms upon their own shoulders with no help from the One who died to bear our burdens. How can we place our burdens upon His shoulders? We must first and foremost put our faith in Him. As with the hope of eternal life, the prayers we pray, and the salvation through baptism, we must have faith. “But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (Hebrews 11:6) . Once our faith has been put in Him (which is the hardest step), let us trust that God will do what He promised: “Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. ...Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof” (Matthew 6:25,34).

Dear reader, are you struggling in the blind snowstorm of life? Jesus pleads with you to come to Him with your life and your burdens and lean upon Him and trust His saving power to bring you through the difficulties (Matthew 11:25-30) . Why not do it? If you decide otherwise, your spiritual fate will be just the same fate of this man’s physical life in the mountains of the great Northwest.

Kyle Moses
Mathis, TX

BELVEDERE BEACON

“Ye are the light of the world” (Matthew 5:14)

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“THAT LITTLE VOICE IN YOUR HEAD”

“Pay no attention to the man behind the curtain” is the famous line from the Wizard of Oz wherein the “wizard” doesn’t want Dorothy and the others to know what is actually going on. Once his “magic” is revealed for what it really is, Dorothy and the others are no longer intimidated by the “wizard” and he is free to give them what they have actually had all along.

It seems to me that many people view the inner workings of their mind in just this way. God has created man with unique mental faculties. We have a reasoning mind; we have a conscience; we have a will; we have emotions. Each of these aspects of the human psyche operate together to make us what we are, namely, a functioning human being.

There are times when we hear the proverbial voice of reason. We need to hear that voice when we are studying for an exam or trying to get certification for a particular job. God appeals to our reason (Isaiah 1:8) when trying to convince us of our need for repentance and salvation.

There are other times when our conscience speaks to us. When we have done something wrong and that “little voice” in our head condemns us for what we have done. The conscience is part of God’s design and it is there to either approve our actions or accuse us of wrong (Romans 2:15). The conscience is a powerful part of our psyche. Well meaning individuals may confuse their conscience for the direct operation of the Holy Spirit.

Another part of the psyche is the will. When we need to do something and it must be done, people will talk about willing themselves to do it. That “small voice” may be saying, “Let’s do this; get going!” The human will is a powerful force that moves us to action. John 7:17 says that we have to will to do God’s will.

We then have our emotions. They are numerous and powerful. Emotions can take us to dizzying heights and they can also bring us down to the depths of despair. Emotions play their role in the human psyche as well. Good emotions may be experienced when we’ve done well. Bad emotions are experienced when we do otherwise. Emotions also move us one way or the other to take action. Happiness, sadness, love, contentment: these are all emotions that we may experience and there are many more. Emotions also are often confused as the act of God in one’s life.

Perhaps most importantly, when all four of these parts of our psyche work together, we can experience strong urges and have powerful experiences. We may get confused and believe that we are experiencing something that we are not actually experiencing, like Dorothy and her friends. We may also attribute our experiences to something other than ourselves, when we have it with us all along. God can certainly be credited with creating us with such wonderful mental faculties; we also can credit the Holy Spirit for inspiring the source of information upon which our psyche can base its decisions. In that way, God/the Holy Spirit is indirectly responsible for what happens in the Christians life when the Christian bases his decisions upon God’s word. However, let’s not conclude that “little voice” is the Holy Spirit when God has created us with such tremendous faculties of mind.

Author Unknown

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

SUNDAY:

Bible Classes for all ages 10.00 am.
Morning Worship 11.00 am.
Evening Worship 6.00 p.m.

WEDNESDAY:

Bible Classes for all ages 7.00 p.m.

EVANGELIST: Ken Chumbley - Tel. No. (803) -279-8663

www.belvederechurchofchrist.org E-mail church@belvederechurchofchrist.org

It has been well said, "Patience is not passive; on the contrary, it is active; it is concentrated strength." Shakespeare said, "How poor are they who have not patience! What wound did ever heal but by degrees." Home said, "Patience strengthens the spirit, sweetens the temper, stifles anger, extinguishes envy, subdues pride, bridles the tongue, restrains the hand, and tramples upon temptations." An old proverb says, "Patience is power. With time and patience, the mulberry-leaf becomes satin." Jean Rousseau, "Patience is bitter, but its fruit is sweet." Hebrew 10:36 says, "For ye have need of patience, that, having done the will of God, ye may receive the promise." We must be "patient in tribulation" (Rom. 12:12). "Be patient therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord." (James 5: 7). "They that wait for Jehovah shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint"(Isa. 40: 31).

PATIENCE DEFINED

The Greek noun usually rendered patience in the New Testament is hupomone. Thayer says of the word, "In the N. T. the characteristic of a man who is unswerved from his deliberate purpose and his loyalty to faith and piety by even the greatest trials and sufferings" (Greek-English Lexicon, p. 644). William Barclay comments on the Greek word: "It is the spirit which can bear things, not simply with resignation, but with blazing hope; it is not the spirit which sits statically enduring in one place, but the spirit which bears things because it knows that these things are leading to a goal of glory; it is not the patience which grimly waits for the end, but the patience which radiantly hopes for the dawn. It has been called 'a masculine constancy under trial'" (A New Testament Workbook, p. 60). Vincent says it is not merely endurance of the inevitable, "but the heroic, brave patience with which a Christian not only bears but contends" (Word Studies, Vol. 1, p. 679). A Greek synonym for hupomone is makrothumia which is sometimes rendered "patience" but usually is translated "long-suffering." Patience then in the New Testament is "steadfastness, endurance, bearing up under stress or strain, doing right regardless of circumstances and never giving up."

OTHER WORDS WITH PATIENCE

To get a fuller understanding of the subject of patience we look at the company it keeps, the words that occurs with it.

1. Patience is used in connection with "tribulation." Paul says, "but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience" (Rom. 5: 3 KJV).
2. Patience is used in connection with "faith." James 1: 3 says, "knowing that the proving of your faith worketh patience."
3. Patience is connected with "hope." "Remembering without ceasing your work of faith and labor of love and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess. 1: 3). "That through patience and through comfort of the scriptures we might have hope" (Rom. 15:4).
4. Patience is connected with "joy." The Christian is to be "strengthened with all power, according to the might of his glory, unto all patience and longsuffering with joy" (Col. 1:11).
5. Patience is connected with some goal of glory, some greatness which shall be. "To them that by patience in well doing seek for glory and honor and incorruption, eternal life" (Rom. 2: 7). "Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and perfecter of our faith" (Heb. 12:1-2.). "If we endure, we shall also reign with him" (2 Tim. 2:12).

EXAMPLES OF PATIENCE In a survey through the Bible some of the well known examples of patience are: (1) Job (James 5:11); (2) David (Psalm 40:1); (3) the Prophets (James 5:10); (4) the Farmer (James 5: 7-8); (5) Paul (2 Tim. 3: 10); (6) Thessalonians (2 Thess. 1: 4); (7) John (Rev. 1: 9); (8) churches at Ephesus and Thyatira (Rev. 2: 3,19); (9) and the greatest example of all, Jesus Christ. 2 Thessalonians 3: 5 says, "And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patience of Christ." "Patience of Christ here is to be taken as the subjective genitive, i.e., it means the patience which Christ evinced in his trials and exhibited under his unparalleled sufferings. [Cf. Pulpit Commentary, Vol. 21, p. 63; Expository Dictionary, p. 168; Bames; etc.] 1 Peter 2: 20-21 says, "For what glory is it, if, when ye sin, and are buffeted for it, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye shall take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that ye should follow his steps."

J. Noel Merideth, deceased.

Let us continue to keep in our prayers Helen Culpepper, Dot McLemore, Pam Gossett and her mother, Kathy Treadway's mother, Lanny Niver's father.

Glenn Aaron was not able to be out Sunday after his surgery

The Arnolds are in Tennessee for the holiday and plan to be back the middle of the week.

Our next pot-luck will be on Sunday December 31, 2006 following the morning service.

Including this Sunday there are three more Sundays left in 2006. We have been able to maintain an average contribution just over the budget. Indeed, we have been able to show average contribution a little over the budget for the whole year. The brethren are to be commended for their giving to the work of the Lord throughout the year. If we can average our weekly budget for the next three Sundays we will be able to finish the year having met the "bare bones" budget that was set. Please consider your giving over the holiday period and, in our giving to others, we do not neglect our obligation to the Lord.

Striving For The Crown

The apostle Paul wrote on the necessity of striving for the victorious crown, the one that "never perishes" (1 Corinthians 9:25). Like a respected coach in athletics, he urges the Corinthians brethren onto victory in Christ! What refreshing words of encouragement!

Now consider our soul in this matter. Would we take the attitude of our contemporaries in the world and submit to the idea that it is "too hard" being a Christian and therefore forfeit ever trying to live as one? This is a serious conclusion for anyone to make, yet many who do not turn to God's assuring Word do not understand the destiny of such a decision.

First of all, if God knew that it would be too hard for people to be a child of God, it would be an injustice on His part to have laid down the principles and commands in the New Testament. Instead, He states that , "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Corinthians 10:13).

Rather than focusing on the "never win" attitude of the world, we should be girded with the strengthening and encouraging words of the apostle! It is with this positive and godly attitude that we can run in such a way to obtain the imperishable crown (1 Corinthians 9:24-25).

Will you strive for the crown or give up your soul?