

Knocked Down

Sunday Morning, October 9, 2016

It's not unusual for Christians sometimes to question why people who don't believe in Jesus as their Savior have a life that seems more prosperous in finances, health and even a sense of ease in their lives. God is not unfair as we would think. His plans are to bless us beyond our comprehension!

Consider **(Romans 8:18)**

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

What a marvelous promise! What a marvelous outlook!

In the "New Living Translation" of the Bible we are told in **(II Timothy 2:12a)**

If we endure hardship, we will reign with him.

God is telling us that He will give us honor and authority, to reign physically with Him in times to come for remaining faithful to Him! If we suffer as a result of living for Christ, we will not get the short end of the stick, but we will receive the best of His blessings!

Taking the heat for standing up for Jesus is not only rewarded for in future promises of God – Enduring hardships for Christ have rewards promised to us now.

Billy Graham said at a crusade in Fresno years ago:

"For everything God asks you to give up for Him, He will replace it with something better."

Jesus teaches us the same thing in **(Mark 10:29-30)**

29 So Jesus answered and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's,

30 who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time—houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions—and in the age to come, eternal life.

God may lead you to endure the hardship of leaving family, friends, state, country and career opportunities for the sake of living for Him.

Example:

Two African Men, heard gospel, received Christ and the price they paid – rejected by family and village. As a result they left all they had to live for Jesus.

God may require you to endure:

- † Public slander
- † Rejection
- † Property Damage
- † Cultic Assaults
- † Physical Threats
- † Scorn and Hatred
- † Constant Spiritual Battles

in order for you to live for Jesus

Recently during the Vice Presidential Debate, both Candidates were asked to share their faith and how it effects their political career. One candidate concluded that his faith would not take precedence over the common wealth of America. The other candidate considered the common wealth of America by his faith based convictions for His Savior, Jesus. Who do think gained public approval on that subject? And who do you think received public scorn? Who do you think honored God? Who will God honor in turn?

To live for Jesus takes courage to endure the hardships as a direct result of standing for Christ your Savior!

Are you willing to suffer hardship for the sake of living for Christ? The Apostle Peter said it best in

(I Peter 3: 13 – 17)

13 And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good?

14 But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed. "And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled."

15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;

16 having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed.

17 For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

So, how do you endure hardship as a direct result of living for Christ?

1. You depend totally on Christ for grace, strength, wisdom, and courage when your faith is challenged.
2. You accept the fact that living for Jesus may come at a great price.
3. You hold to the truth that God will bless and honor your enduring hardship for Him.
4. Look to Bible Characters you read about in the Bible who similarly have gone through hardships and were knocked down and yet, got back up and served God and did mighty things for Him.

Charles Stanley said,

"Moses life was marked by challenge and sacrifice, but more than that, it was shaped by an intimate relationship with God. Every hardship that knocked away his trust in himself strengthened his faith in the Lord. When a new challenge arose, Moses turned first to God for guidance and provision. Scripture tells us that adversity produces a deeper intimacy with the Lord."

Like a boxer that has been knocked down to the mat, learn from the experience and get back up to fight again. Keep enduring, keep standing!

