

Theme for 2021

WE ARE ONE IN THE SPIRIT; WE ARE ONE IN THE LORD!

‘They Will Know We Are Christians By Our Love.’

“I have commissioned them to represent me just as you commissioned me to represent you. And now I dedicate myself to them as a holy sacrifice so that they will live as fully dedicated to God and be made holy by your truth.” “And I ask not only for these disciples, but also for all those who will one day believe in me through their message. I pray for them all to be joined together as one even as you and I, Father, are joined together as one. I pray for them to become one with us so that the world will recognize that you sent me. For the very glory you have given to me I have given them so that they will be joined together as one and experience the same unity that we enjoy. You live fully in me and now I live fully in them so that they will experience perfect unity, and the world will be convinced that you have sent me, for they will see that you love each one of them with the same passionate love that you have for me.”

John 17:18-23 The Passion Translation (TPT)



This Week’s Thought – May 16, 2021

“After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, the one who called you into his eternal glory in Christ Jesus, will himself restore, empower, strengthen, and establish you. ¹¹ To him be power forever and always. Amen.” 1 Peter 5:10-11 Common English Bible (CEB)

“We’re ALL in this TOGETHER.” People have been wondering and even asking since the beginning of time, why God allows evil in the world. Why does He allow bad things to happen? Why does He allow people to hurt or to hurt one another? Why does He allow death, disease, and emotional and relational pain? Why do disasters happen? Why do nations battle?

I imagine there are many reasons, many of which I do not understand. But one clear reason is so He can draw people to Himself.

A great example of this truth is in Acts 7 where the story of Stephen’s stoning is recorded. When Stephen was testifying about Christ to the Jewish Sanhedrin, the council became so angry that they rushed at him, dragged him out of the city and stoned him to death. (Acts 7:57-58)

If we look at what happened to Stephen with eyes that discount God’s Presence, or with a perspective that ignores the Lord’s Providence or love, it seems evil has won. There appears to be no reason for God to allow such persecution. But we must remember that God doesn’t see things the way we do. His ways are higher than ours. (**Isaiah 55:8-9**) And, what seems like evil without purpose is always allowed by the Lord for good.

Christ never allows a sifting, shattering, heartbreak, hurt, trial, tumult, persecution, or problem without reason. God uses all things in His Kingdom for redemption. (**Romans 5:3-5**). Nothing is ever wasted in His economy.

In Stephen’s case, his stoning set off a tidal wave of persecution that scattered the Lord’s followers, (with the exception of the apostles), throughout the provinces of Judea and Samaria. (**Acts 8:1**)

This meant more people could hear about Christ and learn of His love. Because of persecution—not in spite of persecution—the gospel spread. *“Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went.”* (**Acts 8:4**)

This is a reminder that God uses evil for good. It’s a reminder that what brings temporary discomfort for us could mean eternal blessings for someone else. And it’s also a reminder that we do ourselves a mighty favor when we remember that He is the Potter and we are the clay (**Isaiah 64:8**) and that our lives are not our own. (**Jeremiah 10:23**)

During difficult times, we must remember that the Lord doesn’t waste anything, not even the worst things. We must remember that He works all things out according to His good and perfect will (**Ephesians 1:11**), for His good and our glory (**Romans 8:28**).

We must also remember that life most often makes sense in the rearview mirror. Therefore, the hurt you experience now may not seem that it serves any purpose. But you will understand, either in the here and now or the then and there.

“So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you.” (2 Corinthians 4:12)

Application: When things don’t make sense, ask God to help you remember to keep His perspective. He is never shocked, out of control, absent or uninvolved. He is all-powerful, all loving and He always works all things out according to the counsel of His Perfect Will.

Prayer of reflection and response you might pray this week: *“Heavenly Father, I pray for Your Will to be done in my life and in this world. For Your way to rule here on earth as it does in heaven. I am not in control Lord, You are, even though that’s often hard for me to admit and accept. I’m releasing what comes next into Your Hands and trusting You fully. I want to step into whatever path you lay before me, even when it looks different from what I thought I wanted. So, I submit my life to Your Will. This is my prayer in the matchless, wonderful and compassionate Name of Jesus, Amen!”*

Yours in Christ, Pastor King