

**FRIDAY, April 30, 2010:**

Job 8:4 *"If your sons have sinned against Him, He has cast them away for their transgression."*

Maybe you have a friend that is like Job's friend "Bildad". Good ole Bildad is one of those guys that always has an "if only" response to your problems.

You know the type, "If you would have only done this or that or had not done something or other."

For example, his answer to the death of Job's children was that if they had not sinned God would not have allowed them to die. How's that for a comforting friend!

The truth is, Bildad's reasoning had a wee grain of truth to it \ sin does lead to death, and sin does separate us from God.

But dear ole Bildad forgot a couple things...

- First, we all sin (I John 1:8) so a blanket statement like Bildad's has us all in hot water
- The second thing Bildad forgot was that God is not looking for ways to cast us away but rather He's doing everything within his power to reconcile us to Himself.

The point is - there will always be people willing to "throw you under the bus" with their "if only" reasoning. You, my dear friend, on the other hand, stay focused on God \ He will help you find a way through the tough times. In Him are real answers, peace and direction for today and every day.

**SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 26:3**

**SATURDAY, May 1, 2010:**

Job 8:8 *"...inquire of the former age, and consider the things discovered by their fathers; for we were born yesterday, and know nothing..."*

When you really need answers where do you go?

Eliphaz based his advice to Job on a vision (Job 4:12-21). Bildad used a different approach; he built his case on tradition (what has always been believed and done.)

Now there is some merit to both approaches. I believe that God can speak to us through dreams and visions and I believe that tradition can teach us a lot.

I don't know about you, I need something more than a vision that I might misinterpret. And just because we've always done it that way doesn't bring comfort to me when I need a "real time" answer.

So what to do? Go to the Bible. Stay there until God confirms your visions and traditions. And if they do not all line up – GO WITH THE BIBLE!

God's word endures. Visions fade, traditions come and go but when you choose to stand upon the precious word of God, you can be assured that you will not go wrong.

**SCRIPTURE: Psalm 119:160; 1 Peter 1:25**

*"If God is a reality, and the soul is a reality, and you are an immortal being, what are you doing with your Bible shut?"* \_Herrick Johnson, The Preacher's Friend



**Pastor Kemp's Weekly Devotional**

*For the week of April 25, 2010*

Daily Reflection Questions:

- Reflection: Of what eternal benefit was my day?
- Reflection: What eternal truth(s) did I observe today?
- Reflection: Did my behavior match my values?
- Reflection: What am I thankful for today?

*What I am thankful for this week:*

MONDAY: \_\_\_\_\_

TUESDAY: \_\_\_\_\_

WEDNESDAY: \_\_\_\_\_

THURSDAY: \_\_\_\_\_

FRIDAY: \_\_\_\_\_

SATURDAY: \_\_\_\_\_



**MONDAY, April 26, 2010:**

Job 7:1 *"Is there not a time of hard service for man on earth? Are not his days also like the days of a hired man?"*

When we are introduced to Job, we learn quickly that he is a very rich, powerful, and influential man. But through his suffering, probably for the first time in his life, he could identify with people at the bottom of the societal structure. In verses 1-5, he records how he can identify with the day laborer and even the slave.

A full reading of the book of Job reveals that Job was a kind and gracious man to all people; but there is a huge difference between being kind to people less fortunate than we are and really and truly understanding them and relating to them.

One of the goals of every Christian is to be like Jesus. Like Job, Jesus was asked to give up all his riches, privileges, power, and position to come to earth to be like the least of the least. He did this willingly so that we would have an advocate that we knew really understood us.

No one likes tough times and suffering, but could it be that God asks us to go through tough times so that, like Jesus, we will be able to better understand what it's like for other people?

I know it means a lot more to me receiving help and advice from a "fellow-sufferer" than from someone that is just giving me academic advice.

Maybe you're going through one of those tough times right now; I hope and pray that it is over soon; but in the meantime, use those wounds and sorrows to reach out to others in compassion. That is what Jesus did and still does today.

While you are reaching out to others don't forget to reach up to Him – He truly cares for you.

**SCRIPTURE: Psalm 55:22**

**TUESDAY, April 27, 2010:**

Job 29:18 *"Then I said, 'I shall die in my nest, and multiply my days as the sand.'"*

Job 7:6-7 *"My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and are spent without hope.<sup>7</sup> Oh, remember that my life is a breath! My eye will never again see good."*

When things were going well, Job had big plans. He figured that he'd live a long time, "multiplying his days like grains of sand." But then when tough times came he realized how fragile life really is and lost all hope of ever seeing good again.

However, the point I want to make today is that reality is somewhere in the middle. True, none of us really knows how many days we have left on this earth, but if you have lost hope today and wonder if you will ever see good again – let me assure you – you are wrong!

A life devoted to Jesus Christ always has a future and a hope. Do not lose heart! Good times can numb us to the reality that life is not always easy; but tough times can numb us to the reality that life always works out in our favor...through Jesus Christ.

So be strong and optimistic, it's going to be OK!

**SCRIPTURE: Proverbs 23:17-19**

**WEDNESDAY, April 28, 2010:**

Job 7:16 *"Let me alone..."*

Chapter 7 is full of questions to God (at least eleven). Bottom line - Job was asking "Why me?"

- "Why am I having to go through this?"*
- "Why did this happen?"*
- "Why doesn't God help?"*

And the list could go on; we're all familiar with them, we've used them ourselves!

Just today, Sonja was sharing some advice she gave someone that is going through one of those "Why me?" times. She gave them a better question. Instead of asking, "Why me?" she suggested that they ask, **"What now?"**

Great advice! When we're going through tough times, it is easy to forget that God really does care. The things that are happening in our lives are not random bursts of chance or some impersonal fate; God is still in control and He is building us, shaping us, and preparing us for better things ahead.

So dear friend, ask your questions, but in the end ask the best question: **"What now?"** For that question opens the door for the next step and the next day...

**SCRIPTURE: Romans 8:38-39**

**THURSDAY, April 29, 2010:**

Job 7:20-21 *"What have I done to You, O watcher of men? Why have You set me as Your target, so that I am a burden to myself? Why then do You not pardon my transgression, and take away my iniquity?"*

Job's suffering and anguish became so intense that he came within a hair of blaspheming God. Only the difference between a question mark and an exclamation point kept him from it. But that little question mark made all the difference.

That leads me to a conviction of mine: I don't think Christians ask enough questions. I know in my own life, it was not until I began to question my faith and to earnestly seek to understand that I began to make progress as a Christian. I remember being "Pentecostal" because that was what the Church of God was, but in my heart, I had so many questions. It wasn't until I faced my doubts and questions and sought biblical answers that I truly became Pentecostal. Today, I am secure in my faith. When critics rise or fringe factors do crazy things I am not shaken; but it only happened when I dared to ask questions.

The point is this: Ask questions! God is not insecure, He can handle your questions. Matter of fact He welcomes them. He will take your questions and turn them into quests that will lead you to the truth, not just manmade rules and ideas that will not stand the test and trials of real life.

**SCRIPTURE: John 8:30-32**