

FRIDAY, September 3, 2010:

Philippians 1:19 *"For I know that this will turn out for my salvation through your prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ..."*

Author Alister McGrath, in his book, "Intellectuals Don't Need God", recorded the emptiness and sadness in the lives of the rich and famous. For instance he described famed tennis champion Boris Becker and his great struggle with suicide. He recorded the words of the renowned author Jack Higgins who said that the one thing he knows now at this high point of his career that he wished he had known as a small boy is this: *"When you get to the top, there's nothing there."*

Lee Iacocca, the famed car magnet, recorded in his book, "Straight Talk": *"Here I am in the twilight years of my life, still wondering what it's all about...I can tell you this, fame and fortune is for the birds."*

I don't care who you are, everyone goes through times of doubt, discouragement and depression. Sometimes the only thing keeping you sane is knowing that someone cares and that they are praying for you.

When I read today's Bible verse I was reminded of this. You may feel that there is little you can do to make the world a better place, but you are wrong. As long as you can pray, you can pave a path for a better world.

Why not take a moment as you're finishing up your devotions today and ask God to lay someone on your heart, and then pray for them. Sometime today make the effort to contact them and let them know that you care and that you prayed. It will make a difference, I promise.

SCRIPTURE: 1 Thessalonians 5:25

SATURDAY, September 4, 2010:

Philippians 1:20-21 *"...so now also Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death. For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."*

A few years ago Sonja and I were enjoying a little down time in Myrtle Beach. One morning we decided to go to Krispy Kreme for some *manna*, I mean donuts for breakfast. While we were there I noticed across the street a Duncan Donuts (no surprise there), but then two doors down was a little mom/pop store called "The Donut Man." That got my attention. Nestled between these two giants of the donut industry was a brave entrepreneur with a dream.

It has been several years since I've been back to visit that trio of donut shops. I don't know if the "The Donut Man" made it or not, but one thing is for sure, I tip my hat to the owner for his or her spunk and courage.

Like the Donut Man and the Apostle Paul, there will be times in our lives when we are caught up in circumstances and foes far bigger than us - the outcome uncertain. But the life dedicated to Christ has the assurance that whether in life or death, victory is assured.

Maybe that is a message you needed to hear today.



Pastor Kemp's Weekly Devotional

For the week of August 29, 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, August 30, 2010:

Philippians 1:10 "...that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ..."

Professor Chapell in his book, "Christ-Centered Preaching" recounts a story from his childhood. He reflects:

"When I was a child my mother spent an afternoon making a special chocolate pudding for our family of eight. When she brought the fabulous dessert to the dinner table, however, the impact was marred by the deep imprint of a child's finger smack in the middle of the bowl. Someone had sneaked an early taste. My mother asked, "Who?" No one "fessed up," but that did not faze my mother's investigation. She simply began matching the index fingers of the six children to the hole in the top of the pudding until she found the finger that fit!"

Mrs. Chapell was a smart woman! She knew the truth of today's Bible verse: ***Our character leaves an imprint.***

Whatever we touch is marked by our influence. That is why Paul prayed diligently that his dearly loved church family at Philippi would determine to be sincere (pure / transparent) and without offense.

That is my prayer for us today. Let's T-H-I-N-K before we speak. Let's remember the "T" in giving our B-E-S-T – "touching people with the love of God physically, emotionally and spiritually."

Bottom line, it is my prayer that the impressions we leave behind today will point people to Jesus.
SCRIPTURE: Ephesians 5:8

TUESDAY, August 31, 2010:

Philippians 1:12 "...the things which happened to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel..."

I have found that one of the most misunderstood concepts that people struggle with is understanding the difference between their "vocation" and their "profession." Most people just lump them together and end up thinking of them both in terms of their job.

However, nothing could be farther from the truth. Your profession is your temporary job. It is what you do for a living at this particular moment. Having a "profession" is a good and honorable thing. Matter of fact, the Bible teaches that if a healthy man won't work he shouldn't be able to eat. But, let's be clear, your job is not your vocation.

Your "vocation" is what you do because of who you are. It is the things you do "for the love of". Your vocation involves the covenant relationships in your life. For example, if you are married your vocation is to be the best spouse you can possibly be. The same goes for parenting. If you are a Christian, your vocation includes fulfilling the Mission that Jesus left for us. In addition, God has put in you special gifts and abilities. They were given for you to use whether on the clock or off.
(More on this tomorrow)

SCRIPTURE: Judges 13:12

**WEDNESDAY,
September 1, 2010:**

Philippians 1:12 "...the things which happened to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel..."

Yesterday we discussed the difference between a vocation and a profession. Today I want to remind you that nothing has to stop you from fulfilling your vocation.

In the case of Paul, he could have allowed imprisonment to stop him, but he refused. He saw that everything that happened to him ended up being used by God to help him fulfill his special purpose of declaring the gospel to the Gentiles.

I want you to see that the same is true for you. You do not have to allow the events of your life to sabotage God's purpose in your life. Be strong! Be determined! Be faithful! God has his hand on you, never doubt! And by His strength, you can turn the worst into a win.

As Charles Spurgeon once said, *"When your heart is full of Christ, you will want to sing."*

Paul discovered that in a cold damp prison cell and so can you...no matter where you are today.

Be of good courage!
SCRIPTURE: Acts 16:25

THURSDAY, September 2, 2010:

Philippians 1:15-18 *"Some indeed preach Christ even from envy and strife...from selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my chains... What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached; and in this I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice."*

Isn't it amazing how "human" the church can be? And isn't it amazing how we keep being surprised by it?

All the way back to the early church, there were people that allowed their selfish ambition to get in the way and they performed God's work in an ungodly way.

Paul learned this the hard way but refused to become bitter and sidetracked from the main thing. The main thing for him was that Christ was being preached and he determined not to allow anything else to rob him of the joy of that goal being achieved.

Abraham Lincoln once said that the best way to destroy an enemy is to make him your friend. Good advice!

Remember, the only perfect people on God's green earth are you and I...and sometimes I have my doubts about you! ☺ (Just kidding...on both accounts.)

Let's make a deal...let's choose to not allow bitterness and competition to get into our hearts. People may or may not do things for the right reason; we understand that. Let's just leave the sorting out of that sort of thing to God, and you and I do our part in life with joy.

SCRIPTURE: Philippians 2:16-17

Happy Birthday Sonja!
A BIG one! But whose telling ☺