

MONDAY, January 30, 2012:

Psalm 119:57 You are my portion, O LORD; I have said that I would keep Your words.

When I was a boy, the meat you served at the table was an indication of how well you were doing financially. The hierarchy went something like this:

- Rich = steak. I was an adult before I realized that there is hierarchy in the types of beef. I was thrilled to eat any type of beef. Matter of fact, we called beef hotdogs “tubed steak”. ☺
- Next on the totem pole was pork. Pork meant that you were not rich, but that you were improving. (Fried Pork chops made me feel pretty rich!)
- Then there was chicken – that is what good honest, hard-working people put on the table most of the time. (Pot roast on Sundays, the weekly “splurge”)
- I won’t even get into spam, pork brains, and all the other “poor folk” food – though I’ve had (and enjoyed) my share of it. (Yum, fried bologna sandwiches!!!)

So chicken (usually fried) was what most often greeted me as a boy when I pulled up to the table. Golden brown, rolled in egg, buttermilk and flour, and dipped in hot Crisco (my mouth is watering now); there’s nothing like it.

But wait! Don’t go grabbing for a piece of that chicken just yet. There was also a clear hierarchy on eating chicken. The “white meat” (the chicken breast) went to the grownups (the guest of honor and the man of the house). The mother got the next choice, and then the children (by age) got what was left. A child’s portion was, at best, a thigh but most often the “drumstick” (Still finger licking good!) Even to this day when, as an adult, I pass up the chicken breast for a “lesser” piece of chicken, I feel like I’m doing something noble.

Society has learned this lesson well. We have a hierarchy for almost everything. Whether it is cars or clothes, homes or honey – we are give the strong hint that we are a better person, if we are able to get the better “portion”.

Let the psalmist help you today. Whether you’re eating steak or chicken and whether you’re eating filet mignon or the drumstick, if “*the LORD is your portion,*” then you’ve got the best. As the old timers used to say, “You’re eating high on the hog.”

**TUESDAY,
January 31,
2012:**

**Psalm 119:63 !
am a companion
of all who fear
You, and of those
who keep Your
precepts.**

The Law of Association is a vital law to keep in mind. Simply stated, you become like those you associate with. Matter of fact, they often set the limits on how high you can rise in life. Your friends are truly one of your most valuable assets or most horrible liabilities.

One of the joys of our 40-days seasons is that we have an opportunity to associate with people who fear the Lord and desire to follow His precepts.

Let me ask you, what type of people do you hang around with after the 40-days? If they are not the same people you’re spending time with now, maybe you need to take another look at who your close associates and friends should be.

WEDNESDAY, February 1, 2012:

Psalm 119:71 It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I may learn Your statutes.

A couple years ago, I bought Sonja a brand new grill. I know, I’ve disgraced the entire male side of the human race by giving up my God-given responsibility of being the “man of the grill”. But in the words of Kenny Rogers, I’ve learned when to hold ‘em and when to fold ‘em. When it comes to cooking (inside or outside), Sonja is the pro, and I’m not. I’m not even in the game.

But anyway, she was going to use it on Memorial Day for the first time, and we were eagerly anticipating having grilled hamburgers and hot dogs for our holiday meal.

But then we read the directions ☹ and discovered that before cooking on the grill it had to be “cured”. The grill had to be coated in oil and then have a long, slow fire lit in it. That was a big disappointment that day but also a big lesson.

Something that I have learned over the years is that the fires of life either consume or cure. I’ve noticed that when we go through tough times, we either get bitter or better.

My dear friend, I remind you today that God is still in control, no matter what you are going through. If you will see your trials and afflictions as first coming through the hands of your loving Father God, you can have the peace of knowing that if not today, one day it is going to make sense. You are going to come through a better and blessed person.

So take courage dear one...be brave in the fire.

THURSDAY, February 2, 2012:

Psalm 119:81 My soul faints for Your salvation, but I hope in Your word.

I was privileged to serve a number of years on the Chaplain’s Commission of the Church of God. In that capacity, I got to know a number of our military chaplains. These men and women serve our troops with great dedication and put their lives on the line on a regular basis.

One of the chaplains who I was particularly drawn to was Chaplain Richard Pace. He was a career man and had served in active combat on numerous occasions. I remember him telling me the following story that was recorded by his wife Brenda: *“One day he was feeling especially lonely. The desert was barren, desolate and oppressive. Ironically, even as he felt lonely, my husband also recognized his need of a secluded place to spend time seeking the Lord. He decided to climb to the top of his office building to check out the roof. What he spotted there surprised him. The Afghan workers had removed some scaffolding but stopped before the job was complete. What was left of the scaffolding was the perfect shape of a cross. That cross in the desert served him as a reminder of God’s presence throughout the remainder of his deployment.”*

I think things like that happen more often than we realize, and one of the main ways is through God’s word. Everyday God is whispering encouragement and instruction to us through His word. Like the psalmist, let’s make it our commitment that until God comes through, we will stand on His word.