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Pastor's Corner

The Struggles in Life Have Purpose - 1 Peter 5:10

"And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you."

Sometimes life presents us with situations that seem unfair and certainly unwanted. You may be in the middle of one of life's many struggles right now. It is sometimes difficult to get ourselves out the troubles we find ourselves in because we don't always have the resources nor do we have the strength of faith to see us through to the end. We cry out to God and there is no answer. "Why doesn't God answer me," we ask? What have I done that God does not hear my prayer? Answered prayer is about more than being good. It is about being surrendered. It is about being connected. It is about study and meditating on God's Word. It is about trusting not just believing in God. It requires that we walk by faith not by sight.

Time has taught me and many others there is a method in the way God performs. There is a time frame that God operates in that is quite different than our own. God's yes is dependent upon our readiness. I do not believe God answers prayer in our state of preparing. God has to wait until we are ready. God has to allow for our development and our growth. The trials we experience are necessary. The struggles we find ourselves in are sometimes God's method of growing us. Sometimes we find ourselves comfortable with crawling on the ground. It is then that God takes us into the dark places of our development and presses that which has prevented us from hearing and seeing His movement in our life and living. These can be hard times. But they are necessary times that God uses for our development.

A man found a cocoon of a butterfly and day a small opening appeared. He sat and watched the butterfly for several hours as it struggled to force its body through that little hole. Then it seemed to stop making any progress. It appeared as if it had gotten as far as it could, and it could go no further. So, the man decided to help the butterfly. He took a pair of scissors and snipped off the remaining bit of the cocoon. The butterfly then emerged easily. But it had a swollen body and small, shriveled wings.
The man continued to watch the butterfly because he expected that, at any moment, the wings would enlarge and expand to be able to support the body, which would contract in time. Neither happened! In fact, the butterfly spent the rest of its life crawling around with a swollen body and shriveled wings. It never was able to fly.

The swollen body and shriveled wings were indicative of stunted growth. The swollen body represents the focus we can sometimes place upon ourselves and our problems. We can make problems so large that they consume us and prevent faith from entering or growing. Problems can become walls too high for faith to climb if our faith is not developed. The shriveled wings represent an underdeveloped faith that we experience when God's plans for our development are interrupted or dismissed. Struggle is a time for change and unless we can see God in the struggle, the change God is expecting in us will not happen. The man expected the wings to develop without resistance, without struggle.

What the man, in his kindness and haste, did not understand was that the restricting cocoon and the struggle required for the butterfly to get through the tiny opening were God's way of forcing fluid from the body of the butterfly into the wings so that it would be ready for flight once it achieved its freedom from the cocoon.

Sometimes struggles are exactly what we need in our lives. If God allowed us to go through our lives without any obstacles, it would cripple us. We would not be as strong as what we could have been. We could never fly!
Success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached but by the obstacles we have overcome.

God Bless and remain safe,

Pastor Gool