

Dear friends,

Last month I was lead to write about adversity.

Adversity has no respect for who is affected or how for that matter. Problems seem to be everywhere from a tiny house all the way to The White House. Last month, shortly after writing my newsletter adversity came to my house. After years and years of excellent health I went to Urgent Care twice in four days receiving an IV and four rounds of antibiotics. Several days later I had outpatient surgery to fix the cause.

To put this in perspective please understand that the last time I was anesthetized was in 1959 for a broken arm. So in comparison with all the people I know with serious, long term, painful health issues my problem was close to zero on the adversity scale but, it gave me a whole new understanding and empathy for people's health problems. I must admit I haven't really had that much sympathy for other people's pain until I was forcefully reminded of what it is like to really hurt, and mine has only been for a short duration.

“Adversity introduces a man to himself.”— Albert Einstein

So often we forget what is really going on in our own life! We go through the routines of life giving little thought to what is really going on inside. Einstein is correct, the adversity we face and how we respond to those problems is supposed to give us new and better perspectives of ourselves and how we should handle life.

James 1:23-25 “For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.”

Dr. Stanley's quote last month really had a powerful impact on me during my short bit of adversity. He wrote: “Adversity is not simply a tool. It is God's most effect tool for the advancement of our spiritual lives. The circumstances and events that we see as setbacks are oftentimes the very things that launch us into periods of spiritual growth. Once we begin to see and understand this, and accept it as a spiritual fact of life, adversity becomes easier to bear.”

So how did my little bit of adversity bring me to a new and growing relationship with God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit? Well, I'm not sure the learning period is over but so far I've learned that I haven't had much connection with others when they are suffering physically. Through this episode I've also learned that as a child of God I'm not exempt from the problems common to people. When you have been healthy 99% of your life you wrongfully assume maybe your exempt from common problems but, God has made it very clear that is incorrect. However, I am happy to say He was supporting me through the whole event and I'm more aware of his help in time of adversity. Although I was hurting I chose to be focused on Galatians 5:22 and worked to memorize the fruit of the Spirit and then to put it into practice when feeling my worst. Will you join me in focusing to the degree of memorizing the fruit of the Spirit when adversity comes your way?

*Galatians 5:22 ...the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience,
kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness,
and self control!*

Thank you so much for your prayers and loving support for those seeking help during their times of adversity! God Bless! Richard and Debi

Alpha Counseling Services

360-779-2436

alphapoulsbo.org