



“Adversity Can Be Your Friend”

Job 23; 1 Peter 4:12-16; Isaiah 43:1-2 Lesson Text: Job 23:10

America is entering into what is called the Holiday Season: from Thanksgiving through the start of a New Year. Historically the thoughts and actions of people seem to be more compatible, compassionate, and caring during this time. The work world seems less important. People take center stage. Unfortunately, this period is accompanied by some of the most depressing, devastating moments in some peoples' lives. Remembrances of how life used to be clashes with the harsh realities of today and the inability to comfortably reconcile the differences between the two periods cause much emotional, psychological, and spiritual pain.

During this season, adversity seemingly looms larger, and events, which normally would not matter, seek to destroy the ordinarily sane person. Adversity, defined as “an unfavorable event or circumstance,” will visit everyone at some time or another. I am convinced that “ADVERSITY ‘CAN’ BE YOUR FRIEND.” What a strange comment from a person who seeks to avoid adversity. I am convinced, however, that God has a purpose for every adverse situation He allows to occur in our lives. In Isaiah 43:1-2 God says, “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire you will not be burned; the flame will not set you ablaze.”

God has placed adversity in our lives to be our friend, our companion, our mentor, our teacher, our counselor, our redeemer, and our reconciler. Three ways by which adversity can be our friend—IF WE ALLOW IT—are:

I. Adversity Is God's Way Of: GETTING OUR ATTENTION!!!

- A. Cares of the world choke out God's Word – Matthew 13:18-23
- B. God tries to touch us – Jeremiah 35:13-15
- C. Christ's invitation when adversity comes – Matthew 11:28-30
- D. God's ultimate purpose conforms us to the image of Christ –

Romans 8:28-29

II. Adversity Is Our Assurance That God Loves Us!!

- A. God corrects the people He loves – Hebrews 12:5-9
- B. When we recognize and enhance adversity we can stand up, stop shaking and walk straight – Hebrews 12:10-13

III. Adversity Is God's Call For: Self-examination!!

- A. When God judges us, we are chastened by Him to avoid the world's condemnation – I Corinthians 11:31, 32
- B. Embrace your chastisement, be glad, and repent – Revelation 3:19; Deuteronomy 8:5; Psalm 94:12; Proverbs 3:11, 12
- C. Examine your self, confess your sins, and stop sinning – Proverbs 28:13
- D. A place and time for self-examination when adversity comes –

I Corinthians 11:23-30

- E. Pain of adversity should cause us to pray – Psalm 139:23, 24; Psalm 25:5; Psalm 143:10

There is a purpose why God allows adversity to enter our lives.

Do not deny that it exists, but rather seek, learn and embrace

the lessons of the Lord. When we learn the lessons from adversities, they become our friends.

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