

Give Me Patience

By Mark Moseley

He should have known it was going to be one of those days when he got out of bed that Friday morning. It had been a long week and a short night. He had overslept that morning and was in a rush to get out the door and on to work. He liked to read the paper and eat breakfast at home in the morning. Those few moments of solitude and peace were precious to him. It was his time to take a "deep breath" before the start of a hectic day. Not today.

He stopped at McDonald's for coffee and a McMuffin. He thought about stopping at the drive-thru window, but the line was too long. Instead, he opted to go inside and take just a few moments to get his thoughts together. All he wanted was a few moments of peace. Not today.

Instead, he was being held hostage by three small terrorists. He guessed their ages to be about 3, 5 and 7. The word "hellions" came to mind. They were out of control - yelling, wrestling, running - doing all the things kids do when parents permit it. In this case, it was a dad who seemed oblivious to the misery being exacted on all the other patrons by his children. Would this dad do anything to manage his kid's behavior? Apparently, not today.

He could excuse the children's behavior. After all, they were only doing what kids do when parents exercise no oversight or concern. The dad? His lack of consideration for others was more than the man could stand. It was the last straw. Another week, another day he might have ignored the whole scene. Not today.

Calmly he walked over to the dad and inquired, "Sir, are these your children?" The man looked up. "Yes." Eureka! He could see and hear after all! He continued, "Well, you should be ashamed of yourself. These children are out of control. They have made every person here miserable. And I've watched you absolutely ignore their behavior. I hate to think about what they will be like when they grow up."

The dad looked toward the ground. "Sir, you are right. I apologize and take full responsibility for my children's actions. I am their father. I am worried about their future too. Last night their mother died and I've been sitting here trying to figure out how to tell them."

"For God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart" (1Samuel 16:7). Today's Prayer: "Father, forgive me when I am quick to judge. Give me patience and a kind disposition. Let me remember that my judgment is limited by what I see and know while You see and know all things."

“My God, My God”

Do you know which psalm is quoted most often in the New Testament? You may have guessed the familiar and beloved 23rd Psalm, but actually it is Psalm 22. This psalm begins with David's poignant, heart-breaking words that were quoted by Jesus on the cross, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" (Matt. 27:46; Mark 15:34).

Imagine the situation David must have found himself in that caused him to cry out to God in this way. Notice that he felt forsaken and abandoned: "Why are You so far from helping me?" (Ps. 22:1). He also felt ignored: "O my God, I cry in the daytime, but You do not hear" (v.2).

Ever been there? Have you ever looked up into the heavens and wondered why it seemed that God had abandoned you, or was ignoring you? Welcome to David's world. But for every plaintive cry David expresses, there is a characteristic of God mentioned that rescues him from despondency. Through it all, David discovers that God is holy (v.3), trustworthy (vv.4-5), a deliverer and rescuer (vv.8, 20-21), and strong (v.19).

Do you feel forsaken? Seek the Lord. Rehearse His character. And "let your heart rejoice with everlasting joy" (v.26). Even when we don't feel God's presence, His loving care is all around us.

Minute Sermons

During the Cold War (1947–1991), a time of tension between the world's superpowers, Albert Einstein said, "I know not with what weapons World War III will be fought, but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones." It was a moment of clarity that focused on the consequences of the choice to fight a nuclear war. Regardless of the motives for making such a choice, the results would be devastating. I know of a more important choice. "And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve... But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD" (Joshua 24:15).

Christians share an odd belief in parallel universes. One universe consists of glass and steel and wool clothes and leather briefcases and the smell of freshly ground coffee. The other consists of angels and spiritual forces and unseen places called heaven and hell. We palpably inhabit the material world; it takes faith to consider oneself a citizen of the other, invisible world. "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Phil. 3:30).

Martha Ballard lived during the American Revolution. She was a midwife who traveled by canoe, horse, or sometimes on foot to assist women in delivering their babies. At a time when many women died in childbirth, Martha's track record was extraordinary. In more than 1,000 deliveries, she never lost a mother in childbirth. Jesus' record is far better. "Of those whom You gave Me I have lost none" (John 18:9).

The 23rd Channel (Selected)

- The TV set is my shepherd. My spiritual growth shall want.
- It maketh me to sit down and do nothing for its name's sake, because it requireth all my spare time.
- It keepeth me from doing my duty as a Christian; because it presenteth so many good shows that I must see.
- It restoreth my knowledge of the things of the world, and keepeth me from the study of God's word.
- It leadeth me in the paths of failing to attend the evening worship service and doing nothing in the Kingdom of God.
- Yea, though I liveth to be a hundred, I shall keep on viewing my TV as long as it will work, for it is my closest companion.
- Its sounds and its pictures they comfort me.
- It presenteth entertainment before me, and keepeth me from doing important things with my family.
- It fills my head with ideas which differ from those set out in the Word of God.
- Surely, no good thing will come of my life because my TV offereth me no good time to the will of God.
- Thus I will dwell in spiritual poverty all the days of life.

A Moments Wisdom

- Where all think alike, no one thinks very much.
- A man is known by the silence he keeps.
- God's love does not keep us from trials; it helps us through them.
- The best drawn plans are useless if the house is never built.