

"If my enemy is defeated, why do I hurt" ...and Why would God not remove Paul's Thorn?

The ministry of reconciliation.....

We hurt because we are looking to the flesh. The flesh always hurts when it dies. If we want only God's will and we know that every (apparent) evil is really our ministry, it is our opportunity to bring the Kingdom of God to this earth.

2 Co. 12 The Thorn in Paul's Flesh. Why did God NOT remove this thorn of the Judaizers bugging him, stoning him and harassing his ministry everywhere he went? Because it would have only temporarily solved the problem. They would still be like a stick of dynamite with a lit fuse running around for a place to explode. God wanted to reconcile this thing, and perhaps even those people; He wanted to eternally change this evil to good by applying the blood of the Cross to the situation. This is the ministry of reconciliation Paul spoke of. This was not a problem for Paul, but was his ministry; to turn this thorn into a pearl.

"My Grace is sufficient". Grace is the divine influence upon the heart and its reflection in the life. It is favor, doing one a favor. God's grace here was Paul's ability to turn the thorn into a pearl. This was sufficient, enough to handle this "light affliction which brings a greater weight of glory". God is glorified IN His saints when His saints allow Him to do what He did while He was on earth. Jesus turned every situation into good. Even the beheading of John brought the healing miracles and the feeding of the 5,000. The blind man who was blind from birth, Jesus said it was not his or his parent's sin that was the issue, the issue was that his blindness was to show the works of God. The dying of Lazarus, the funeral at Nain, pretty bad stuff turned into good, reconciled.

When we are young believers we learn about Romans 8:28 where all things work together for good, etc. That is great. At least it helps us to "make it through" and crawl out of bad situations without our dignity, and we can say with bloody fingers and white knuckles "well praise God I guess some day that thing that beat me up will work for my good". It will. But how much better to intercept that situation while it is still active, make "friends with it" or as the Lord said "make peace with your adversary while you are on the way" and turn that piece of garbage into a ruby right now. My friends, I can guarantee you by The Word of God and by my personal experiences, that this is real. This is the most powerful weapon we have. This is why praise is such a powerful weapon. This is how we thank God for ALL things. This is how we bring God's Kingdom to this earth. This is the way to make sure that whatever comes along, we know that it carries with it the tool box to change it to another block in God's Kingdom! Did God send it? No He does not originate evil. Yes He directed circumstances to make sure that evil thing came to us so that we may perform ministry upon it. Yes? No? How can that be? Like Paul said "Oh the unsearchable wisdom of God, etc."

We need to stop taking our problems so personal. We need to stop complaining about having problems and begin to look into our bag and start to be concerned if we are out of problems. Ask God for more ! Why are we always so selfish about the discomforts of our life? We cry, “ will God ever deliver me?”. Forget about poor me, and look at the fact that you are called to be a minister of reconciliation. Consider it a privilege that He can trust you with such a great ministry. This is how to turn your financial problem into getting your banker saved. How to turn your illness into finding a cure for it. How to turn a life full of tragedy into a life full of fruit. Fruit from chaos is the promise from The Word.

Think of it. The World crucified to you. In other words, nothing this world order can throw at you can be an enemy. You crucified to the world. No more desires in you to indulge in the World’s garbage.

I think that Hannah Hunard's book, Steps to the Kingdom states this idea best in her explanation of the parable of the 10 virgins in Matthew 25. There were actually only two virgins, two believers, each with 5 senses. Both had lamps (the Word of God). Both had oil, (The Holy Spirit with which to see into the Word). But the wise ones had enough supply of oil to use their spiritual senses, over and over and over without running out, while the foolish had to resort to their natural senses. Now the wise ones saw this apparent evil with their spiritual senses, saw it as a friend, reconciled the garbage and stood fast to see The Lord come on the scene with His endorsement and manifestation. The foolish had to run get more oil, they could not understand with their natural senses how a “thorn in the flesh” could help them. They probably continued to ask The Lord to remove it, and when He was ready to come on the scene, the evil had already harmed them, it was too late.

Don’t miss “the coming of the Lord” into your situation like the foolish virgin.

There is a process to suffering. There is a process for coming into His presence via the Old Testament Tabernacle. In the same way, I believe that there is a process in suffering which has in it more eternal purpose than we realize.

I highly respect those saints that went before us with brave and unyielding trust in our Lord, not knowing anything expect that they would not let go. Many of the first martyrs knew the value of their sufferings. They knew that it was ministry, and that their life was a seed for the salvation of many more.

In the first three chapters of Revelation, Jesus is looking for a few overcomers. People who will follow Him no matter what comes. I believe that God wants to bring a renewed realization to His overcomers that there is eternal ministry taking place with suffering; beyond that of character building which we do not deny or set out as unimportant.

It involves the casting out of the old generation or Adamic inheritance and the bringing in of the new race of Christ Jesus, the New Name. There is always a storm, it is an "end time" process and it eternally displaces something of the Old Creation with something of the New Heaven and New Earth, New Jerusalem which is made up of jewels (wrought by suffering).