

Daily View

“But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called ‘today’” Hebrews 3:13

February 5, 2021

“Steadfast Love”

You have granted me life and steadfast love,
and your care has preserved my spirit.

Job 10:12

We all know the story of Job — at least the first couple of chapters. He lost everything that human beings value in the physical realm: his home and belongings, his kids, his friends, his health and, apparently, even his wife who, at least in one moment of anger, wished death on him. *“Curse God and die,”* she said (2:10). Job spent time wishing he was dead or never even born. He had lots of questions for God usually in the form of complaints. Then his friends come along and, after a week of stunned silence, they begin to give him the third degree.

I can't even imagine how alone in the world he must have felt. Yet, sometimes in the midst of his suffering we see a sliver of light. We see that light in the verse above. In his pain, in spite of his loss, he finds it in his heart to acknowledge the blessings he's received from God. He highlights *God's steadfast love*.*

I don't think I could ever seriously could question God's love for me; I have too much experience with it. At the same time, I doubt I would think much about it if I was in the middle of the mess that Job is dealing with. Remember, he's scraping his itchy, scaly boils with broken pottery pieces (2:8).

It's been said that suffering makes you self-centered and it does tend to do that. It's easy to take good health for granted and when we don't have it we are prone to self-pity. Self-denial is difficult in the face of physical suffering.

I've found II Corinthians 12:7-10 to be a tremendous help with this (not that I've attained, but I press on):

So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that

the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Whatever that thorn in the flesh was for Paul it reminded him of the inherent weakness of the flesh which, in turn, reminded him of how much he needed God in his life. This is a case where God specifically denied the desired answer to a prayer. Why? Because God loved Paul and knew that Paul would be more effective with the thorn than without. I think, at my age, I understand that. I may be wrong, but when we are fighting an illness, physical, mental or emotional, we are reminded of how much we depend on God.

And we know that God's love is steadfast, never failing, always there. Job remembered that even in his darkest hours. We can legitimately question whether Job was “patient” but we cannot doubt that he maintained his strong faith in God. Though that faith was sometimes expressed in his whining,

he was whining to a God who he knew was there. That belief never wavered.

That's remarkable. But what's more remarkable is God's love for us. We don't deserve it and at some point we learn that we can't earn it. It's something God gives us; it's a gift. It's grace.

Job was faithful and he didn't have what we have; he didn't have Jesus in his life (cf. Job 19:25). We, however, are so blessed to be privy to some of the most beautiful words ever uttered: *“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life”* (John 3:16). We cannot reflect too much on God's love for us.

*Heb., *chased*, translated as “loving kindness,” “mercy,” or, as in ESV, “steadfast love.” Doing some research on this word will be richly rewarded.