

Sunshine and Showers

“When the night is darkest, the stars shine brightest.”

Too often we long for total sunshine but we forget that all sunshine makes a desert. We need the showers also. Life is a pilgrimage, made up of rough places and smooth; mountain peaks and valleys. The heroes of the faith had their ups and downs. This is the stuff of which life is made. We tend to think that the happy life is the one free from sorrow and trial; but the truth is that we learn through suffering, we are healed through heart aches.

The first full-length movie produced by Walt Disney was a phenomenal success – “Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs” – it contained both tears and triumphs. The second movie – “Alice in Wonderland,” contained only mirth and laughter and was a miserable failure. The conclusion reached was that realistic, true to life drama must contain both joy and sorrow, storms and rainbows.

We all love stories about people who have overcome handicaps. The ex-con makes good; the polio victim learns to walk again; the blind and deaf take courage from Helen Keller. Obstacles can be blessings in disguise. How often in seemingly impossible situations the grace and power of God has changed defeat into victory.

It is not so much what happens to us but how we take it that counts. The only time some people look up to God is when they are flat on their backs. There is no victory without a battle. Heaven itself can only be reached by the way of Calvary's Cross. No goodness of ours will ever merit salvation.

The news these days can be very depressing but this is no time for hopeless complacency. Don't be like the man who said, “I hope the world does not come to its end in my lifetime, because my nerves are bad and I don't think I could live through it.” We can look at all the negative factors around us and decide matters are hopeless or we can affirm that God is greater than our problems and with Him all things are possible. Without God we cannot; without us He will not!

In our marriage, Carol and I discovered that in hindsight we can see more clearly the guiding hand of God. In the midst of seemingly disasters, we know now that He was working behind the scenes for our highest good. No matter how difficult life seemed to be, there was always something to be thankful for; and no matter how favorable things appeared, there was always something to be concerned about. So we seek to live, maintaining this balance, between thanksgiving and concern.

“So, whether on the hilltops high and fair I dwell, or in the sunless valleys, where the shadows lie, what matter? God is there!” – Barry

Weeping may endure for the night but joy comes in the morning (Psalm 30:5).