

## Upcoming Events

**Business Meeting:** September 8 at 4:30 p.m.

**Ladies Bible Class:** September 15 at 4:00 p.m.

**Panera Bread Open Bible Study:** Tuesdays at 6:00 p.m.

**Hebrews class** Mondays at 10:00 a.m.

## Adversity...continued

The apostle Paul understood this same truth. In his second letter to Corinth, he gave a list of many of the trials he had endured, then he said, *“Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong”* (2 Cor. 12:10). Read the verse again—*infirmities, reproaches, needs, persecutions, distresses.* Pleasure in all of this? How strange! But what insight David and Paul had into how to deal with all that life brings.

Here is a rule which might change our whole view of life. Anything which draws me closer to God is good, and anything which keeps me from God is evil.

## September Birthdays

3 Wendy Cortes      11 Marie Burruss      15 Marcos Perales  
16 Jim Burruss      24 Mason Perales  
30 Dortha Gentry      30 Kurt Hoffman

### Regular Meeting Times

Sunday.....9:45 a.m.  
Sunday.....10:45 a.m.  
Sunday.....6:00 p.m.  
Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

**Preacher:**  
Mike McKnight

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# Indio Informer

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## What’s the Secret?

One of our ultimate goals in becoming mature as a Christian is an inspired statement of the apostle Paul in Philippians 4:11-13

*“I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.”*

The following comments include wisdom quoted from the homiletics of some commentators in the Pulpit Commentary.

Life is, in truth, a checkered scene. Every hour we pass from one condition or mood to another. We change in mind, body, and circumstances. We alternate between friendship and bereavement, prosperity and adversity, sunshine, and storms.

The spiritual life has its seasons, its winter and its spring, its times of depression and its times of fervor. It cannot but be affected in some degree, while we are in the flesh, by physical causes and by outward circumstances. We must not allow ourselves to be cast down; we must struggle on, always looking unto Jesus. Our moods and feelings are changeful. He is *“the same yesterday, and today, and forever.”*

Contentment is a rare and precious Christian grace. It must be distinguished from spiritual self-satisfaction, which is sinful and fatal, and is concerned with our own inner condition, while true contentment has regard to our external circumstances. It must also be distinguished from the recklessness of folly and from the apathy of despair. It is a quiet restfulness in the midst of all kinds of changing events.

He had learned to be independent of external circumstances. That joy in the Lord of which he speaks so much in this Epistle armed his soul against the trials of life. He that hath found Christ will not be wholly cast down by outward troubles. “*Cast down* [rather, ‘being cast down’], *but not destroyed*” (2 Corinthians 4:9). “*Come unto me, all that are weary and heavy-laden... and ye shall find rest unto your souls.*” No one was ever more tried than St. Paul; but he was content in the midst of hardships, self-sufficient in the Christian sense, not with the independence of pride or Stoicism, but resting upon Christ. He was armed both for prosperity and adversity.

Trials, hardships, etc. in our lives teach us so many things if we are willing to learn. Unless we understand that, we’re likely to become bitter rather than better. It is easy to say, “*Thy will be done;*” it is very hard to work that prayer into our lives. St. Paul did so; so, may we by the grace of God. This state of mind is not innate; it is attained. Paul “learnt” it.

Christian self-sufficiency, which is really the sufficiency of Christ, is shown in sorrow and in joy; “in all time of our tribulation, in all time of our wealth.” The true Christian can bear misfortune and hardship with dignity, without ill humor and complaints; he can bear riches and honor with self-possession, without arrogance or elation. This true self-sufficiency manifests itself in all the circumstances of life, “*in everything and in all things.*”

Paul says it is a “learning process”; it’s not automatic or instantaneous without effort. It requires reflection on our lives. And he tells us the “secret”: it’s Jesus Himself who gives the strength whether we are “*filled*” or “*hungry,*” have “*abundance*” or “*suffering need.*” He was taught of God. “*I have been instructed;*” “*I have learned the secret.*” This Christian self-sufficiency comes from the teaching of God the Holy Ghost; it is a secret which He alone can teach. “The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him.” The soul in its converse with God learns many mysteries of spiritual experience, mysteries of grace, mysteries of self-renunciation, mysteries of self-consecration. St. Paul had been initiated into all. Long training, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, had led him through all the deep and holy

mysteries of the life that is hidden with Christ in God. We must ask the same Holy Spirit to guide us into all truth. Paul was strengthened in Christ.

Here is the source of Christian self-sufficiency. It is only in Christ, in spiritual union with Christ, that the Christian possesses strength. Without Him, we can do nothing; in Him, we can do all things. His strength is made perfect in our weakness. Therefore, the Christian must not be discouraged; he must not shrink from the battle against evil in himself and in the world. He is indeed weak and helpless, but he has the presence of Christ, and in the strength of that presence, he can do all things. “*We are able,*” said the sons of Zebedee. We may in all humility, say the same if we do verily believe in Christ. All things are possible to him that believeth. God giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

### **Adversity Makes us Bitter or Better**

Excerpts from article by Dan Jenkins

David makes some truly amazing statements in Psalms which allows us to look into his heart and learn why he was so special to God. David had immeasurable adversity when even his own son led a rebellion against him.

So, how did he view such trials? Read his words, and they may change how we look at life. David said, “*It is good that I was afflicted.*” Our first reaction is that such could not be right! How on earth could any suffering be seen as good? Read the rest of the verse. David said, “*It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn your statutes*” (Psalms 119:71). David understood a lesson which each of us should learn early in our life. If our life has little misery and adversity, we tend to ignore God for we have little need of Him. On the other hand, adversity provides us the opportunity to come closer to God. How we respond to such trials shows the kind of heart we have. It is so important to learn that adversity makes us bitter or better.

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