



Compassion

Sharing hope...

2019 - Fourth Quarter

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Something People Say

Blessing and cursing come out of the same mouth. My brothers, these things should not be this way (James 3:10).

Sometimes, Christians are tempted to wrongly ask God to *damn* something. Peter, for instance, called down curses on himself while trying to dissuade the people around him that he wasn't one of Jesus' disciples (Mt 26:74). In anger, James and John asked Jesus if they should curse a Samaritan village for refusing to welcome them, and ended up being scolded by Jesus for such a suggestion (Lk 9:54). When great tragedy had robbed Job of his children, his possessions and even destroyed his health, Job's wife urged him to curse God (Job 2:9). But Job rebuked his wife saying, "Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?" In an incident with a fig tree, Jesus teaches us what can happen if God follows through on a curse: "In the morning, as they went along, they saw the fig tree withered from the roots. Peter remembered and said to Jesus, 'Rabbi, look! The fig tree you cursed has withered!'" (Mark 11).

Jake was a rather crude and crusty old gentleman who I stopped in to visit at the hospital. While sharing his current situation with me, Jake pointed to his broken leg and ankle and painfully exclaimed, "God *damn* it." On hearing this, I decided to tell him a story.

A man was driving down the interstate when a tire suddenly blew out. He pulled his car over to the side of the road and got out to inspect the damage. On seeing the shredded remains of his tire hanging on the rim, he kicked at it angrily and shouted, "*Damn it!*" Then, while struggling to get the spare out of the trunk, he busted a knuckle and recoiled in pain.

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Too Many Mistakes



"Why Didn't God Do Something?"



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NEWS



Something People Say

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Frustrated from the whole ordeal, he kicked the bumper and yelled at his car, “God damn this piece of junk!”

“So, Jake,” I asked, “what if the Lord would have actually given the man in the story what he had asked for, and granted his curses: *Poof*, no more tire! *Poof*, no more car! Do you really think that’s what the man wanted?”

With a bemused look on his face, Jake replied, “Well no, Pastor, it’s just something people say.”

“So, then,” I continued, “the man was just using God’s name carelessly or inappropriately then – both of which are sins against the second commandment.”

Realization registered on Jake’s face and he got the point of my story. He was sorry for cursing. With Jesus’ forgiveness in his heart, he would now try to only “call upon God’s name in every trouble, pray, praise, and give thanks.” In Jake’s case, I was blessed to be the chaplain who used God’s love to help him make some changes in his life. Thank you for your support.



*by Chaplain
Ken Wenzel*

Too Many Mistakes

It was a rare occasion, but on this particular evening, only one man came to the meeting room for Bible Study. He was familiar to me, having attended some of my previous classes. He came from a reformed background and knew his Bible well, and he would often try to encourage others in their Christian living.

On this particular occasion, however, I could tell that something was troubling him. We talked, and it wasn’t long before he expressed his fears and the tears began to flow. “I’ve made too many mistakes, broken God’s rules too many times,” he explained, fearful that he had disqualified himself as a child of God and certain that his heart was just too rebellious to be saved.

I don’t recall the exact words I used in my response, but I was able to reassure him of God’s unchanging, unbreakable love. I encouraged him to shift his focus away from his sins and look, instead, to the cross of Jesus Christ. I reminded him that sorrow over sin is also part of the Spirit’s work.

He was transferred to another correctional facility shortly after that night, and I never saw him again. I do not know the rest of his journey; I only know that I am thankful for having the opportunity to listen to his fears and concerns, and point him to Christ.

by Correctional Volunteer Dan Krueger



“Why Didn’t God Do Something?”

I began meeting with Jason several months ago. We started our study of God’s Word with Creation and the Fall into Sin and continued with God’s plan to save sinners. We spent a lot of time on how God made use of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and their descendants in His plan of salvation.

Last week, Jason and I studied how the Children of Israel turned away from the true God to worship and serve false gods. As Jason thought about Israel’s cycle of idolatry following the death of Joshua, he asked me, “Why didn’t God do something?” I smiled and told Jason, “He did!”

I assured Jason that the one true God did not sit idly by as his children walked away from him. Instead, he did something. He sent his messengers, the Old Testament prophets, to call his sinful people to repentance and trust in his promise to send a Savior from sin. And as Jason knows, God kept that promise.

I also reminded Jason that God continues to “do something” to save sinners, including him and me, to this day. Through the Bible, the one true God still speaks to sinners today, calling them to repentance for all of their many sins. Through his Word, God still invites all sinners to trust in Jesus, his Son, for the forgiveness of sins and life everlasting in heaven. And using the Gospel, the Holy Spirit still brings people to faith in Jesus as their Savior from sin.

I thank the Triune God that he is “doing something” in the hearts and souls of so many men and women, including Jason, with whom we have the privilege of sharing the Word of God. And I pray for our Lord’s richest blessings as we continue *sharing hope with those who need it most.*



by Chaplain Charles Iles

*“Through his
Word, God
still invites
all sinners to
trust in
Jesus,”*





Sharing hope...
with those who need it most!

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