

Thursday, May 21, 2020

Devotional Thoughts from Pastor Jim Murr...

"For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, 'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.'"

(1 Corinthians 1: 18-19)

When I was a kid, my dad drove a tractor-trailer for a couple of years. I remember him telling me about a time or two when he was driving in wintry conditions downhill on the highway when he noticed in his mirror that the trailer was starting to "jackknife." That means it was sliding to the side due to the slippery road. The natural thing to do when something seems wrong when you're driving is to slow down. In other words, HIT THE BRAKES! He said that if a truck is beginning to jackknife on a slippery road, the way to fix it is to actually speed up. This puts the trailer back where it belongs. If you try to slow down, the trailer will pass up the tractor! Sometimes the smart thing to do is opposite of what our initial thinking tells us to do.

In the reading above, the Bible tells us that the whole idea of the Cross of Jesus ... the whole idea of putting your faith in a Savior who got nailed to a cross goes against human wisdom. It's not logical. In other words, some people see the whole thing of a crucified Savior as being ridiculous. It's like speeding up when you're starting to jackknife. But for believers, it is God's power to save! It's the source of our forgiveness.

God says in the reading, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise..." God will confuse people who don't humble themselves before Him. This is especially true when it comes to the way that we are saved – that is, the way that our sins are forgiven. But this is true in other ways that God works as well. Proverbs 3:5 says: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding." God just doesn't work in the way that we think He should work, or the way that we would work if we were in charge. An inexperienced driver would "hit the brakes" when they should actually speed up.

Many people are questioning the decisions of governors and the President of the United States when it comes to how to handle the current crisis. Do we open up the economy to avoid a depression? Do we keep the country closed until the virus is more under control? Tough decision. Part of the freedom we have in our nation is that we are free to question, and even criticize, our nation's leaders and the decisions that they make. We do so because they are human beings and we presume they are capable of making mistakes.

The good news is, God is not capable of making mistakes. Is it a mistake when God allows a tornado to destroy part of a town? Is it a mistake when God allows an earthquake to flatten a city? Is it a mistake for God to allow a pandemic to cross the globe? The answer is "no." He is without error. God knows exactly what He's doing, even if it doesn't make sense to us. To the unbeliever, Christians seem foolish to rely on a crucifixion that happened 2,000 years ago. But we know the truth about that event.

God never makes a mistake. That's good to know at a time like this. This pandemic is not happening because God got distracted. It's not happening because He has stopped caring about us. The Bible says, "In all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose." And so we wait in humble silence, and we trust in the wisdom and the goodness of God. It may not make sense to us, but then again, we are not God.

God's peace!
Pastor Jim