

Thursday, June 4, 2020
Devotional Thoughts from Pastor Jim Murr...

"Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life."

Revelation 2: 10

Satan does have a limited reign in this world. In fact, the Bible says, "the god of this age (Satan) has blinded the minds of unbelievers so that they cannot see the light of the gospel." He's on a leash, but it's a fairly long leash. Because of his presence in this world, there is suffering and pain and anguish. But Jesus tells believers in the reading above, "Do not fear what you are about to suffer." Why not? Because there is a limit to what Satan is allowed to do, and there is a limit to the time in which he can do it. It's only for "ten days," says Jesus in the reading above. "Ten Days" is a symbolic phrase meaning "a short, limit period of time."

We only need to put up with the nonsense of this world for a short amount of time. And there is one thing that Satan cannot harm, and that is your soul – as long as we remain faithful to Jesus. This is what Jesus alludes to when He says, "Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life." In other words, "don't give up" and "don't give in." The hard times of this life are not an indication of defeat. In fact, just the opposite, they are an indication that the time is near when Jesus will fulfill his promise that all people will "see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven."

In a sense, you might say, things have to get worse before they get better. In order to fill the tooth, it has to be drilled. Jesus tells us to remain faithful even to the point of death. For the first readers of the Book of Revelation, those words were meant to encourage the early believers to keep the faith even if doing so meant being killed for their faith. For you and me, it may simply mean remaining faithful until the day we die.

No matter what the circumstances of life may be, nothing changes our relationship with God through faith in Jesus. Things are simply progressing toward the Last Day. The reading above says that "the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested." For some, this prison may consist of steel bars and a small cell. For many others, it may be the prison of uncertainty, or hardship in this world. Perhaps it may be the prison of unemployment or financial difficulties. It could be the prison of disease. It might be the prison of not feeling like we can trust our fellow man. But this prison is only for "10 days," a short period of time. On the other side of those "10 days," the crown of life is awaiting us.

Jesus keeps his promises. And He has promised that "everyone who looks to the Son and believes in Him shall have eternal life."

God's peace!
Pastor Jim