

Remember, down doesn't have to mean out.

Just because you lose a battle now and then doesn't mean you've lost the war. Pick yourself up, dust yourself off, and get back into the fracas again. There's work to be done, people to see, prayers to make, lessons to learn. Activity is the key to winning. Don't ever quit. Only the weak quit. "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Paul, in Phil. 3:13-14). "I press," said Paul. You must do so too, for he closes the admonition

with "Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded." Are you?

And remember, most of all, that you and God make a majority.

There is no force on earth strong enough to separate you from His love and to keep you out of His kingdom. Not even death itself can do it. Certainly, we may boldly say, "...the Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do to me." Paul said, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ...Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us." Stay with God and you can't lose,

folks.

And finally, remember that Solomon said, "In the day of prosperity rejoice; in the day of adversity consider, for God hath set the one over against the other..." (Eccles. 7:14). Don't try to second-guess Providence, or ask "why me?" Relax and let it happen. Don't ask, "Why has God allowed this?" Rather, ask, "What does He want me to do with this?" Allow the good days to cause rejoicing. Allow the bad ones to increase your learning.

Life is happy for those who love God and are keeping His commandments, no matter what comes along. After all, life is constructed of two things: good days and bad days. ~

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Crucified With Christ

David A. Cox

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me" (Galatians 2:20).

This is a most interesting statement made by Paul. How is it that Paul could say that Christ now lives in him? It was because Paul had molded himself into the image of Christ. How did this happen?

Paul began this process when he went into Damascus and was told by Ananias to "Arise, and be baptized and wash away thy sins" (Acts 22:16). Paul had lived in the flesh as a Jew and as a Jew could glory in who he was (Philippians 3:7-14). But at Paul's conversion, that changed. He no longer lived doing what he previously thought was right or what would give him a lofty



reputation among the religious and political leaders. He crucified self to live for Christ.

Paul wrote to the Romans concerning the crucifying of the old man. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized

into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should walk in newness of life...Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin" (Romans 6:3-4,6). Notice Paul said he was buried and arose to walk a new life. Why? Because the old man had been crucified; he had put to death the affections and lusts of the flesh (Galatians 5:24).

Our new life will be focused on the things above, and not on things on the earth. We will have our minds set on Christ for he is now our life (Colossians 3:1-4). Yes, we continue to live in the flesh, but now that Christ is enthroned in our lives, our actions will be pleasing to Him. Our lives will be lives of faith. Trusting Him

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Assembly Schedule Sunday

Bible Class for all ages ___ 9:00 AM
Morning Worship Service ___ 10:00 AM
Evening Worship Service ___ 6:00 PM

Wednesday

Bible Class for all ages ___ 7:00 PM

VISITORS ARE WELCOME!

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and looking to His word to find the direction for our lives (Romans 10:17; Proverbs 3:5).

What is the motive of the Christian's life? One motive may be heaven, the prepared home for the faithful, and that is a great motive. But another motive Paul mentions here is the sacrifice of Christ for us upon the cross, "He

loved me and gave himself for me." As we walk in life thinking of how much Christ valued us by giving His own life for us, we should be motivated to live to please Him and to do the work He has left for us to do.

May God help us to be "crucified with Christ" and to mold our life into the image of His dear Son.

May our hearts and minds say as the song says:

"Mold me, make me, as you'd have me be,
Take me, use me, that the lost may see,
Guard me, guide me, thru this pilgrim land,
Make me as clay in the potter's hand. ~

Two Men Attend Worship Services

By Bill Hall

Two men attend worship services. The first man attends wholly out of a sense of duty. He understands the teaching of Hebrews 10:25: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together," and is determined to obey faithfully that teaching. He will not allow anything within his power to stand in the way of his attending the worship periods of the church.

The second man recognizes his duty in this matter, too, but his primary motivation in attendance is his love for the Lord and his joy in blending his voice and heart with other Christians in praise and adoration to the Lord. He delights in worship and the spiritual strength he derives through worship.

The first man is mentally passive throughout the worship service. If the words of the song happen to catch his attention, he observes and appreciates them; otherwise, he just sings along with little concern for what he is singing. If the sermon is inter-

esting, he listens; otherwise, he just relaxes, and hopes the time won't drag too badly. He does meditate briefly concerning Christ's suffering and death as he partakes of the supper, for somehow the importance of the memorial feast has been impressed upon his mind.

The second man comes mentally prepared to worship. He pays close attention to the words of each song and makes the sentiment of the songs his own sentiment. In fact, he sometimes studies the words of frequently used songs so he will be sure he understands their meaning. Depth of meaning is of greater importance to him than a catchy tune or rhythmic beat. He listens to each phrase of the prayer that is led, and if he can approve the petitions of the prayer, he unites with the one who leads with his "Amen." He discerns the Lord's body as he breaks bread, and he listens carefully to the sermon, volunteering his attention, hiding the word in his heart, that he might not sin against God (Psalm 119:11). If his mind wanders

occasionally, he brings it back to the worship. He worships with a consciousness of God as the object of his worship, the One toward whom these expressions of adoration are directed.

The first man reduces his service to a mere code of external rites, while the second man obeys "from the heart," combining the outward with the inward. The first man is more likely to be satisfied with his service to the Lord, for he has accepted the easier standard, but it is the second man who enjoys God's approval. "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth" (John 4:24).

We ask the reader: "In which of these two men do you see a reflection of yourself?" The need is obvious! We must cast off our laziness and indifference, revitalize our spirits, and bring ourselves to worship God acceptably. There is a considerable difference between mere attendance of a worship service and truly acceptable worship. ~

Good Days and Bad Days

By Dee Bowman

"There is an appointed time for everything. And there is a time for every event under heaven" (Ecclesiastes 3:1).

Life's like that. Just about the time you think you have it all figured out, some new adventure disrupts your confidence and flies in the face of your conclusions. Nobody has life figured out.

I wrote in my journal recently: "I don't suppose it's possible to have any length of time where you are right with the world. I had 15 minutes one day where it just seemed everything was just right. Then the phone rang. Pfsst! Right out the window. But then I've had times when everything was all messed up, tangled, distorted, and disheveled. And right in the middle of my pity party the mail comes and there's a nice note—unexpected and joyful—and for the next 15 minutes things are right with the world again. That is, until the phone rang. Pfsst! Oh well, the mail comes again tomorrow. Maybe..." Trying to figure life out is a futile enterprise; one destined for sure failure.

Here are some suggestions for making life—all of it—more pleasurable and more useable:

Don't run from trouble.

You can't go fast enough. Trouble will find you. Face it head-on and with determinate faith. There is no temptation bigger than you can bear if you put your confidence in God (1 Cor. 10:13). And there's no problem that can't be solved if you keep in touch with your spirituality. Even the fear of death is conquerable if you have sufficient trust in your Master (Heb. 2:14-16, 1 Cor. 15:51-58).

Don't let discouragement rob you.

Discouragement is one of the

Devil's most functional tools. It wrestles a man down by robbing him of his faith, and in doing so, saps his energy to keep on. It strikes every age, every spiritual level. It causes faith to flag and determination to become impotent. It's a power-grabber, discouragement is. But faith is still the answer. Trusting confidence in God will triumph over discouragement. But you have to engage it. You have to shove your faith in front of the discouragement before it can conquer it. Listen to what God said: "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Heb. 13:5). Do you believe it?

