



The Tri-Cities Edifier

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Are You Sure It Doesn't Matter?

Greg Gwin

Imagine yourself walking into a drug store to have a prescription filled. You hand the pharmacist the written prescription form from your doctor, and then watch in amazement as he throws it in the wastebasket without even reading it. Then, without reading the label, he hands you a bottle of pills.

By now you've gotten your nerve up, and you ask, "Man, what are you doing?"

"Well," he answers, "I'm giving you some medicine."

"But you didn't read the prescription, and you didn't even look at the label on these pills."

"It doesn't matter," he says. "Medicine is medicine - one pill is as good as another."

"No sir!" you object, "I want the pills that my doctor prescribed, and no others."

There's very little chance that you will ever visit that drug store again. Common sense says that this is no way to handle the important business of our physical health. Why not allow the same kind of common sense to help us in the far more important realm of spiritual things? For some reason folks have decided that "anything goes" in religion. "Join the church of your choice" has become more than a mere slogan - it is the rule that most people live by. "One church is just as good as another," we are told. How can this possibly be so?

Jesus said, "*In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men*" (Matthew 15:9). Note that the Lord says that some worship is "*vain*," meaning worthless or good for nothing. He goes on to explain why it is worthless - because it follows the commandments of men rather than the will of God. Are you sure that one church is as good as another?

MAKE A Good Day

Greg Byers

In a sermon several years ago now, Brother Bowman remarked how "Hope is the apparatus that reaches out into our future and affixes itself to that for which we long." I can still remember how much I liked the way this sounded, I wrote it down immediately and have obviously committed it to memory. It wasn't until a few more years had passed that what had been a really neat way of framing a concept took on a great deal more significance. My Mother returned to the Lord in 2013 after 40 years away ... this expression now had a face ... and a beautiful face it was and still is!

Many of you have heard me say, "Make a good day!" Some of you are aware that I've borrowed this expression from my Dad. I once asked him why "make a" instead of "have a" like everyone else remarks. He told me, "have a good day seems to suggest that I'm at the mercy of the day and what it may have in store for me." He went on, "make a good day, to me; suggests that I'll be bigger than the day. I am in control of the effect circumstances will have on me and my life." This too has been a pleasant consideration ... I like the way it sounds and have enjoyed fielding the reactions of others who've remarked to and about its use. But just as the earlier expression would come to hold a larger significance, take on a personality due to a specific circumstance ... so too has this recently been the case with the conveyance of making today a good day.

As most of you are aware, Janet recently learned that she may have Parkinson's disease. To say that the diagnosis came completely out of the blue is an understatement of epic proportion. It was during a conversation with a friend about this news that Daddy's expression popped in my head. You can't control the fact that the wind is blowing Greg, but you can control the effect her gusts will have on your life. You can and will make choices related to making it a good day ... or not!

As I've read text messages and listened as Jan spoke with family, friends and co-workers about this circumstance, she has done so with comments about her faith and her desire ... her hope, that she handle this with grace and dignity. Choosing to make a good day! I was present when she shared the news with her Mother ... "there are a host of folks dealing with much worse situations than this, we'll do all we can the best way we can." Again, choosing to make a good day!

Then I reflect on the outpouring of support and encouragement, well-wishers and well wishes coupled with comments both general and specific related to prayers being prayed daily on her behalf ... lifting up the name of Janet Byers to our Heavenly Father. Assisting us in our choosing to make a good day!

Then comes the flood of words that our God has recorded in order than we might know of the love He has for us and the provisions He has made available to us ... assuming we choose to avail ourselves of them and making the ultimate good day of whatever this life may throw at us.

- **Philippians 4:12-13** ~ 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 (in him that strengtheneth me).
- **2 Corinthians 12:9** ~ (in response to Paul's questions pleas concerning his thorn in the flesh) And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.
- **James 1:2-4** ~ Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.
- **1 Corinthians 10: 13** ~ There hath no temptation taken you but such as man can bear: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation make also the way of escape, that ye may be able to endure it (God is wise as well as faithful, and will make our burdens according to our strength. He knows what we can bear... God makes an open road, but then man himself must walk in it).
- **Hebrews 10:23-25** ~ Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.
- **Galatians 6:2** ~ Bear one another's burdens and thus you will fulfill the law of Christ.
- **2 Corinthians 8:1-5** ~ Now, brethren, we wish to make known to you the grace of God which has been given in the churches of Macedonia, that in a great ordeal of affliction their abundance of joy and their deep poverty overflowed in the wealth of their liberality. For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability, they gave of their own accord, begging us with much urging for the favor of participation in the support of the saints, and this, not as we had expected, but they first gave themselves to the Lord and to us by the will of God.

Years ago, my brother was walking with the preacher to the building one Sunday morning. A small boy approached them and held up a penny to Hutch. Bud told him to hang on to the penny and resumed his conversation with the preacher. He felt a tug at his slacks and turned to see the boy still there, still holding up the penny. As Hutch attempted to again tell him that he could put the penny in his pocket the preacher remarked, "Hutch, he wants you to have that penny and you need to learn to be a gracious receiver." In addition to our prayers for relieve, direction, grace and dignity will be having a spirit that allows us to humbly accept the assistance offered by others. To our Southside family ... you have already and will continue to help us by your ever-present willingness to give of yourselves resulting from you having first given yourself to the Lord God who remains on his throne yesterday, today and for eternity.

So ... hope will continue to be the apparatus that reaches out into our future and affixes itself to that for which we long ~
MAKE a good day! Southside Congregation Pasadena, TX