

St. Matthew A.M.E. Church
Bible Study
Monday, June 19, 2005

Adversity
St. Luke 15:11-24

The nature of our adversity alone does not determine its spiritual value in our lives, it is our reaction to it, that makes suffering valuable.

When adversity strikes there are several responses we make. Some:

1. Play the blame game. We blame everybody but ourselves. It's never our fault.
2. Pity Party. "Nobody cares about me anymore." Misery loves company.

Right Response to Adversity

But there is a correct response to adversity that will make adversity a blessing. When adversity is the result of our sin:

1. Assume responsibility. Don't look for anyone else to blame. Youngest son acknowledged responsibility.
2. Confess and repent of our sin. Youngest son confessed and repented.
3. Do not complain. If we have sinned we have no right to complain.
4. Ask God to help us discover the weakness through which sin crept into our lives.
5. Recognize that God wants to use this adversity in our lives to bless us.
6. Thank God for not allowing us to get away with our sin.

When adversity comes as a result of God or Satan

Responding to adversity when it originates with God or Satan is more than responding to the consequences of sin, yet the way we respond whether it is God or Satan is the same. There are however two things which are important to remember. If God is behind it, He is going to use it for our good. If Satan is behind it, be assured that he works under God's supervision. The scripture shows us that God even uses Satan's schemes to accomplish His will.

When adversity occurs and it's not the result of our sin, here is how we should respond.

1. Reaffirm your position in Christ. Remind yourself of who you are and what you have in Christ.
2. Ask God to remove the adversity from your life. God will respond to your prayer according to his will.
3. Reaffirm the promise of God's sustaining grace. God's grace is sufficient for us.
4. Thank God for this unique opportunity to grow spiritually.
5. Receive adversity as if it were from God. Nothing can happen to us, unless He allows it, and if He allows it He must have a purpose in it.