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Oct. 24, 2017

*He will add the increase...*

In the last few months I have been putting in some work. The work has been rather unpleasant. It has involved looking at repeated failure, past traumas, and my own horrendous behavior. Not pleasant!

In an earlier post I spoke of "getting to the root" of the matter, and the rage that developed as I went about this task. Well I got to the root. When all is said and done it came down to a deeply held belief that I was a horrible person, a miserable "dirt bag" with no hope of ever being anything or anyone else. I now know that for the lie it was and that lie was the root of my problem. It has been rightly said that a person will not consistently behave in a manner that is inconsistent with their belief about themselves.

But as I dealt with that issue, the lie, I was plagued by 3 recurring thoughts/questions.

**1st.** Was the work I've done over the last 10 years worthless? I'd earned both secular and theological degree's, written a book, developed a discipleship program for inmates. But most everyone in my life has been less than supportive of these activities- even questioning repeatedly their worth.

**2nd.** Why did I believe I was hopeless unredeemable?

**3rd.** I've prayed for 25 years for god to cause me to be a man of godly character. So why does it seem little progress was being made until I put in the work? He could have waved "his magic wand" and "fixed" me long ago right?

These questions nagged at me while I dealt with digging out the root. The thing is I could not spare the time to explore these issues, troubling as they were.

God sent two angels to address these nagging questions, just out of the blue. First I received a letter from a very dear friend. She-out of nowhere-praised and validated my educational pursuits, my writing ability, and my ministry! She spot-on addressed all these of those activities I'd been calling into question!

Then another dear friend wrote me about a struggle she had. This is about the most "perfect" person I know, but yet she shared with me her struggle with perfectionism and self-acceptance. I never would imagine her to have such struggles, she's so totally together, you know? Then, in her letter, she included an article about the absolute value of slow growth, and the fact that that is how God most often does things, as seen by his repeatedly using agricultural similes to explain himself and His will. I was so amazed to have received these letters! Yes, the information they



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contained blessed me. But the awesome fact that in a matter of days God sent His ministering saints to speak directly into my anxieties and concerns "out of the blue," Spoke even more loudly what I needed to hear, that He is right now present with me, and that as I strive to follow His lead, He will add the increase to my stumbling efforts. Praise god.

So today I am in Narcotics Anonymous, (NA), AA, GOGI (A pro-social culture program designed to increase our likelihood of making positive choices), The Urban Ministry institute, Therapy, A Psych group called "T4C"(thinking for a change ;) and I know these things matter. For me it is kind of like the joke about the guy and the flood. The poor guy was trapped on the roof of his house praying for rescue (or for a godly character). He drowns and asks god "Why did you not save me?" God answers. "I sent a boat and a helicopter, but you did not take advantage of them!" Well the things I listed above are things God has sent in answer to my prayer that He creates in me a Godly character. They've been available the whole time. ☺

God bless you as you travel through this life. May you recognize the "boats and helicopters" He sends your way. Amen.

Stay strong, do good, and smile, knowing it's the bad days that make the good days good. ☺

Love and prayers,



me