

THE FIX

There is an old southern saying that; if God is fixin' to fix you (pronounced fee-ix in Texas, Georgia, Louisiana etc.) but if you try to fix the fix, He's fixin' to fix you with, He'll find another fix to fix you, until you let the fix He's fixed for youfix you! I first heard this saying from Pastor Jack Taylor, a man I esteem highly. However, I suspect that the saying has been around forever. In my counseling experience the saying is a truism. But it seems that time and again those whom God has cornered for major spiritual surgery by means of a fix, look for a way to escape their dilemma regardless of who gets hurt in the process.

What is actually behind the cute saying? I think that I Peter 4:1,2 has much to say on the subject. "Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men but for the will of God." I believe this means that through the proper response to suffering a person can experientially come to a point where he no longer is controlled by the power of sin, but rather is able to exercise his will in freedom. Verse 12 of the same chapter reads, "Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy."

You could make a point that the suffering mentioned here is due to persecution. It could include this, but the chapter begins by stating (above) that suffering is also for the purpose of liberating us from ourselves (the flesh), so that we can be responsive to His glory revealed in us. This glory is certainly none other than Christ Himself. Why does God devise a plan to set us free from ourselves? Is it not to save us from self-destruction? "Those who sow to the flesh will of the flesh reap corruption.." "For if you live according to the flesh you will die;..."Romans 8:13.

What do these verses mean? They mean that no matter what we bring to the table trying to make our life work in the way of gifts, IQ, talent, strength, beauty, knowledge, education, manipulation, pizzazz, salesmanship etc., eventually our self-made strategy for living will fall apart. It is true that not everyone will see their marriage disintegrate, but many will. Not everyone will see their kids turn to drugs, revelry, rebellion, disobedience, but many will. Not everyone's business will go belly up, but some will. In other words, there is going to be destruction somewhere in our life no matter how hard we try to avert it. Sooner or later, if we live out of our own resources, we will find disintegration in our life because that is the way the flesh's strategy for living has to end or God's word is void! Am I saying that every time a child rebels it is the parent's fault, or is every destructive thing that happens in a person's life due to flesh? No, I can't judge anyone in that way. But it would be good to examine ourselves when these things occur to see if the loss is the Philippians 3 variety. In it Paul says, "Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish that I may gain

Christ” verse 8 and verse 10 “that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,....”

You see God’s great love for us desires to save us from self destruction. Our plan might be for God to change our circumstances or to give us another chance. Perhaps it might be to win the lottery or get another job. Whatever we think the answer is, it is likely to be our version of fixing the fix. But just as the will of a wild horse must be broken in order for the horse to know the love of an adopting cowboy who wishes to save it from starving to death or dying of thirst during lean years, so our will must be broken in order for God to save us from our selves and our self sufficiency.

Do you know the sad reasoning many people give for this kind of loss? They will say things like, “I married the wrong person; I had some bad breaks: my boss is unfair; I didn't have enough money to weather the storm; my parents didn't prepare me for life. Some or all of these things might be true, but that does not prevent God from using them to fix us a fix! The fact of the matter is that if we live out of our own resources (no matter how hard and how long we call on God to help or rescue us while doing so) we will eventually self- destruct. “Beloved do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you...”. Friends this is a promise, a given, a reality from which there is no escape.

How can we know that God orchestrated the fix, that is can I know that God set me up rather than the devil? Does it really matter whether God does things Himself or whether he uses the devil for His work? As Gene Edwards asks in his book Exquisite Agony, “Who arranged the suffering and crucifixion of Christ”? Who set up His fix? Was it not God Himself? Who arranged Jacob the Deceiver’s fix in arranging for him to spend 14 years with Uncle Laban, a worse deceiver than Jacob? Who arranged Job’s fix? Who arranged Joseph’s fix? Then who do you think arranged your fix and mine? As Paul Billheimer says, “Don’t Waste your Sorrows”!

We have a vested interest in fixing our fix before we’re fixed. No one I know likes to have personal failure or weakness exposed. No one that I know wants to go through loss or be humiliated by rejection. But sooner or later, if God is involved in the equation, we need to come to helplessness and hopelessness over our ability to solve our dilemma. And don’t think for a minute that if this is the real thing that we can solve just one problem or fix just one situation, and everything is going to be all right. We need to understand that God is fixin’ to work on me, not my problems or circumstances. He had more of a complete transformation in His mind. He was thinking more about a death-my death-which would qualify me as having been, “conformed to the death of His son” Philippians 3:10. The process leading up to death is seldom pleasant and usually quite scary. It often involves suffering the loss of all things! It is not unusual to be frightened of God Himself as He asks of me a complete and total abandonment of myself to Himself.

Well then, how can we know that we are in the middle of “The Fix”? Quite simply, one should ask if he can remember ever really experiencing the entire process before. If “The

Fix” has had the intended effect, it is unlikely that we will need to ask if this is the time we were dreading an encounter with the divine plan for my personal Gethsemane and Calvary. Moreover, the fix that results in my coming to the end of myself will result in a significant change such that I will never be the same again. The glory of the Lord will be revealed! As Jack Taylor says about a broken man in his book, *The Key to Triumphant Living*, “He experiences the same onslaughts of Satan and the world (and worse) but is not overcome. He has an inner strength which seems to penetrate through his entire personality and pervades every area of his life. He has enthroned Christ in all his life and now Christ presides over his entire personality. The residing Christ becomes the presiding Christ. The resident Christ becomes the reigning Christ! The soul becomes the blessed captive of the risen Christ. Now, he who formerly sought for peace but found it not becomes a source of peace as it flows out of him like a river. He who sought for love and was starved for it becomes a river of love! He who longed for the fruit of the Spirit becomes himself a number of rivers. The promise of Jesus was that he would become...not a little stream, or a little brook, and not even just a river but RIVERS OF LIVING WATER.” (selected excerpts from *The Key to Triumphant Living*, pages 62-64.

Finally remember the ending of the saying. “if we fix the fix before He fixes us, He’ll have to fix us another fix to fix us”.

Let this be your prayer,
Father I know absolutely nothing happens by chance. Lord, if my present circumstances are divinely orchestrated in order to bring me to the absolute end of myself, then I embrace my suffering, my loss, my circumstances, my persecutions. I welcome the cross of Christ in my life, so that I might be conformed to your death. I give up all rights to save myself from my appointed end, and I give you permission to finish the work no matter how much or how long I protest. In the name of my executioner, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself,

Amen.