

(For Monday, March 20, 2017) **What kind of self-fulfilling prophecy are you pursuing?**

*“Go now to the place Shiloh where I first made a dwelling for my Name and see what I did to it because of the wickedness of my people Israel.” (Jer.7:12-NIV)*

Shiloh, on the Jordan’s West Bank remained the first permanent location of the Ark of the Covenant for almost 400 years. But by the time Samuel was called, the worship leaders at Shiloh had become profligate. (See 1Sam.2:12-17) So, when the Ark was taken into battle with the Philistines, God allowed it to be taken from the Israelites. By Jeremiah’s time, Shiloh had become a place of ruins. A “self-fulfilling prophecy” is a term that links a particular action with its inevitable outcome. In this passage from Jeremiah, we see the unavoidable outcome for a church (or a person) that continues to lead a life which is only superficially righteous. Sooner or later, such a church or a person will be reduced to ruin. The good news is that ‘self-fulfilling prophecies’ work the other-way-round too. A church or a person who faithfully pursues a journey which keeps the will of God as their central focus will eventually prosper.

So, what kind of self-fulfilling prophecy is at the center of your life?

(For Tuesday, March 21, 2017) **How will you bless your great grandchildren today?**

*“He established a testimony in Jacob...[so] that the next generation might know [his teachings], the children yet unborn, and arise and tell them to their children, so that they should set their hope in God.” (Ps.78:5-7a-ESV)*

Time and again in the Bible we see how God works through his people to orchestrate a deliverance which reaches way beyond our time. So, he has already set in motion events which will impact the lives of those who come after you. This realization brings with it the staggering fact that the things you do (or do not do) today will bear fruit (either good or bad) in succeeding generations. It’s a sobering thought and a humbling responsibility to carry with you through this life the power to alter not only your present life, but the lives of those as yet unborn.

So, how will your words and actions today bless the lives of those who come after you, so that they too will “set their hope in God”?

(Office Memo for Wednesday, March 22, 2017) **Do you understand that God loves you, even in your brokenness?**

*“You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.” (Rom.5:6-NIV)*

Sometimes, I encounter people who say, “I don’t need to change. God loves me just the way I am.” This is painful to hear, since it discounts the worth of Christ’s sacrifice. The verse from *Romans* is astounding when we come to understand that God didn’t wait for us to repent and amend our lives for him to Send his Son to the Cross. He waited in pain for thousands of years as his children betrayed him time-and-again. And then, at the perfect moment in the history of the universe, he gave us Jesus. But the moment of that gift was when we were still steeped in sin. You see God doesn’t love us “just the way we are.” Because his heart breaks every time one of his children sins and chooses to walk apart from him.

Nope. God doesn’t love us just the way we are. He loves us DESPITE the way we are.

(Office Memo for Thursday, March 23, 2017) **Have you banished isolation from your life?**

*"The one who sent me is with me. He has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him." (Jn.8:29-NIV)*

The word from which we get the term "Apostle" means "sent out" in Greek. While we cannot claim to be God's "Apostles" we are certainly sent out into the world in order to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ. The other concept that this verse introduces is the believer's victory over isolation. When you speak to people who are suffering from depression, they will often describe their pain as feeling isolated, even in the middle of a crowd. But it has been my experience that by walking through this life in the assured hope of our salvation, we can effectively banish isolation from our lives.

Have you found out what a joy it is to be constantly in the company of Our Savior?

(Office Memo for Friday, March 24, 2017) **What do your words say about your soul?**

*[Jesus said] "Then will know the truth and the truth will set you free." And they [the Pharisees] said to him, "We are Abraham's descendants and have never been slaves to anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?" (Jn.8:32-33-NIV)*

The exposure in these two verses is astounding. Jesus promises freedom for those who accept his teachings as truth. And the Party of the Pharisees respond with one of the most obvious lies in the Bible – that they have never been slaves to anyone. Because the very identity of the Children of Israel is wrapped up in their enslavement and freedom from it (first under Pharaoh, and then under the Assyrians and the Babylonians). There is really no further need to question whether or not these men are honorable, since their statements reveal such unrighteousness.

What about you? What do your statements reveal about you as a person?