

Pastor's Corner

Thank God for Faith

We are well into the year 2010, wow...how time flies! Last year was one to remember, as I was personally affected by the tragedies in my small island country of Samoa. I remember finding myself in tears every time I read an article or saw a news report on the internet or TV. That event, for me, closed out the year 2009. This year we begin with another major tragedy, the Haiti earthquake, one even much bigger than the tragedy in Samoa. I found myself also in tears as I watched the devastation in Haiti especially with the mass number of deaths.

But there are also tragedies that happen in our own personal lives that affect us even more, as it deals with our inner being. Tragedies, whether big or small, external or internal, play a major role in our personal development. They can either discourage us or encourage us, they can either tear us down or build us up. We've all seen it in the many faces we've seen on the news from Samoa and Haiti.

Truth is, the affect tragedies have on us, whether external or internal, depends on the status of our faith relationship with our Lord. That's why I am so thankful for the concept of faith in God. I cannot begin to imagine life without faith.

I am certain of the benefits of a faith relationship with God as I have internalized it in my own life. I am also certain of the fact that one way God develops our faith is through difficulties. So, when tribulations come our way, whether external or internal, the Apostle Paul says that, "tribulations produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope" (Rom 5:3-4). I like how George Mueller puts it, "God delights to increase the faith of His children...I say, and say it deliberately—trials, difficulties and sometimes defeat, are the very food of faith."

Faith is all that we have to bank on when tragedies and tribulations occur, even in our individual lives. I am certain there will be more of these difficult situations to come, if not this year, then next. But I'd like to say that, as Christians, we don't have another option aside from faith. Without faith there's no telling what we would do and where we would be.

Martin Luther sums it up well, "God our Father has made all things depend on faith so that whoever has faith will have everything, and whoever does not have faith will have nothing."

May we continue to move through this year knowing that as tragedies and difficulties come our way, that God in His mysterious loving ways allows us to go through it only to build our faith in Him.

- Pastor Fred Toailoa