

A Word on Wednesday from Pastor Tonia

"Lemonade from Lemons" 1/10/24

*Here is a call for the endurance of the saints,
those who keep the commandments of God
and their faith in Jesus. (Rev 14:12)*

Joseph, favored son of Jacob, was sold to human traffickers BY his brothers. Quite a fall for a boy who wore a fancy, colorful coat, and dreamed of his brothers bowing to him. He ends up serving in the Pharaoh's palace. In prison, he becomes known for interpreting dreams. After a while his deciphering of dreams draws him to the attention of the Pharaoh, soon Joseph is his second in command and soon his brothers bowed to him. God is able to use Joseph in Egypt to save His people. Life gave him lemons and God turned them into lemonade.

Joseph never lost sight of God, he didn't give up his faith, his hope, or his morals. He served God even when he was in prison.

Job, was a man much favored by God. He had a large family, a large flock, and a large faith. Satan figures if only he could get ahold of Job, Job would curse God. And God, knowing His man, tells Satan go ahead and try. Soon Job had lost his sheep, his servants, and his children. Job mourns his losses, yet he still praises God. After being attacked himself, Job acknowledges the ways of God are mysterious, so how can one know them. But Job never abandons his faith, even if Job does not have the words to defend God, God is still God.

So words of wisdom to those of us faced with a load of lemons, learn and live. Life happens. Bad stuff happens to good people. No, we don't think we deserve it, but that's life.

Be assured, you've got this. Be encouraged, you will endure. Look at the story of the many Christ followers who have gone before us. Listen to the stories in Old Testament, of those who worshipped God and strove to keep His commandments, as they faced decisions and temptations.

When we are faced with struggles, losses, loneliness, if we can hold on to our faith in Jesus the Christ and not lose sight of God; keeping the faith, and remaining hopeful, we can make it through. We will mourn, yet we can still praise God. Continue to reflect the love of God, serve God, even in the midst of your circumstances. This is a decision. We can't control what happens to us, but we can control our reactions to them, so let's make lemonade with those old lemons.

We are aware of many who, when facing deep losses, hold on their faith, allowing God to strengthen and comfort them, giving God glory for all He has done, knowing He can turn lemons into lemonade. Can we resolve to do likewise?

Please pray with me:

God of love and peace, You strengthen us to endure. Help us to be faithful to You and to Your commands during times of difficulty, drought, disgust, and death, even though we endure the loss of dreams and loved ones. May we determine to keep our faith in Jesus the Christ. Help us to hold on to the promised presence of the Holy Spirit who comes to comfort us. We give You thanks and praise, for You alone are God, and You will never abandon us.

Amen.