



Newsletter

Volume 35 #8

April 22, 2013

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These are difficult days. God's Word has told us they would come. I Timothy 3:2-5 describes sinful men with nineteen evil traits. When I think of the Boston Marathon bombing brothers, terms like brutal (savagely untamed), hateful (having no love for good), treacherous (betraying traitors) and reckless (thoughtlessly rash) found in verses three and four seem to especially apply.

And yet, if unredeemed, we all reek with the reality of depravity. Romans 1:29-31 indicates twenty-one characteristics of the depraved mind. Those in that condition are "being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful ..." (NASV).

Not to diminish the atrocity nor unsympathetically lose sight of those who are suffering, let us be mindful of the menacing evil in all of us. It is truly a terrifying reality. Let us remember that amazingly, but by the grace of God, there go we. Ephesians 2:1-5 makes this crystal clear. There Paul reminds believers of their former condition. He notes that we were dead in our trespasses and sins and walked in worldly, devil directed and disobedient ways. As such we indulged our lusts and were by nature children of wrath. This is really bad news. The really good news begins in verse four where the apostle writes, "But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved) ..." (NASV). If God were not graciously merciful all of us would be menacing.

With Paul, let us rejoice that, though evil, we can be put into God's service because Jesus saves sinners! Paul notes that even though he had been a blasphemer, persecutor and aggressor he was shown mercy "because I acted ignorantly in unbelief; and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, with the faith and love which are found in Christ Jesus. It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all." (I Timothy 1:13b-15 - NASV).

All men are evil. All of us are sinners; but God is graciously willing to forgive all who come to Him in repentance and faith. (Consider Romans 10:13). This truly is amazing grace.

Looking Up,
Pastor Chuck Circle