

Nevertheless God!

I. Slide#1 **Announce:**

- A. Officer Jennifer Metoyer, w/MPD is hosting **2 fundraisers** for the 3 yr old fire victim.
1. Hemet man was arrested in connection with the suspicious death of a Murrieta woman whose body was found inside her blazing apartment last week.
 2. It happened at the Waterstone Apartments on Hancock Ave.
 3. A neighbor pulled a 3yr old boy out of the burning apartment to safety.
 - a) The boy was released from a local hospital in good condition.
 4. The 1st will be at **Chick-Fil-A** on Monday, Nov19th, 5-8pm. 20% of every sale.
 5. The 2nd will be at **Pump It Up** on Thursday November 29th, 4:45-6:45pm. 70% toward.
- B. Slide#2-13 Dr. Les & Julie Ghironzi: Back from Burma.

II. Slide#14,15 **Intro:**

- A. **A look back:** Here Paul picks up again from a discussion in **2 Cor.2:12,13(Read)**.
1. Paul had no rest because he didn't know how the Corinth situation had developed.
 - a) He departed to Macedonia to meet Titus to get the news.
 2. **Remember**, there were some problems in the church at Corinth. Paul did a quick visit, which only made things worse. - **After** this he dispatched Titus w/a stern letter. - **Paul** couldn't rest until he heard back how they were doing. - **He** met up w/Titus in Macedonia & was joyful to hear the trouble was over, relationships were healed, & all was well!

III. Slide#16 **CLEANLINESS IS NEXT TO GODLINESS! (1)**

- A. We should **ask God** to cleanse us like David asked for in Ps.51:2,7 **Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, And cleanse me from my sin...Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. But**, we should also **cleanse ourselves!**
- B. **We** should also "*put away*" things that defile. (not only expect God to do this)
1. Is.1:16 **Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; Put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes. Cease to do evil.** [4 commands]
 2. James 4:8 **Cleanse** your hands, you sinners; and **purify** your hearts, you double-minded.
- C. **So who does the cleaning then? Both!**
1. If alcohol's an issue, maybe you need to empty it ALL out of your house; get the drugs out of your secret hiding place; flush those prescription med's that weren't

prescribed to you, or were prescribed, but are no longer “needed”; your porn sites out of your “favorites” file, & blocked off your computer!

- a) **Maybe it's** cleaning up the **files** of your mind.
- b) **Maybe it's** stopping the **videotape** in your mind from playing & replaying...how to payback those who have hurt you, or what he or she did to you.

(1) **What do you need to take the scrub brush too in your life?**

- c) **Do you take out your garbage weekly, or do you let it pile up for the month?**(P.I. Trash strike)

D. **Slide#17,18** In the early 1930's *George Hale* selected **Palomar Mountain** (just south of us here) to be the best sight for an **observatory**. **It would include a 200-inch reflecting telescope & be administered by Caltech.** The site selected was chosen for its high mountain at 5,600', & a place where there is a clear, unobstructed view of the heavens. **(and less likely to be affected by the growing light pollution problem in urban centers like L.A.)**

1. **Similarly, faith** requires for its **heavenly vision** the **highlands of holiness, separation, and the pure sky of a consecrated life.**¹
 - a) **“Sleep with clean hands, either kept clean all day by integrity or washed clean at night by repentance.”** John Donne, *Christian Reader*, Vol.32, no.5.

IV. **Slide#19 SINGING IN THE RAIN! (2-7)**

A. **Slide#20** Ever see on the news during a forest fire where the **fire jumps** the fire break?

1. That's what we have here. **Paul's subject jumps** from his relationship to **God** to his **relationship w/people**.
2. When your fire for God starts to **smolder**, don't increase your **activity** to try to generate warmth. **Instead, rekindle the fire.**
 - a) R.A.Torrey - **It takes time to be holy; one cannot be holy in a hurry, and much of the time that it takes to be holy, must go into secret prayer.**
3. In a fire place, the heat 1st rises **through the chimney** **before** it starts to **radiate heat** to those sitting around itself.
 - a) And so w/us. Our heat must **rise vertically**, before it can **radiate horizontally**.

B. (2) He didn't **wrong** them, **corrupt** them, or **cheat** them!

1. When we do these things then the people who came around us for **warmth** end up getting **“burnt”!**

C. (4) **I am exceedingly joyful in all our tribulation!** - **How? Why?**

1. **Pain(tribulation)** is actually our friend!
2. **It was designed by God to Warn us something's wrong** (i.e. broken bone; my hand is burning on this stove; etc.).
3. **It was designed by God to Instruct us** (i.e. spank).

¹ Adapted from A.B.Simpson in *A Larger Christian Life*. *Christianity Today*, Vol.41, no. 8.

a) Is the best instruction in our lives from the good times, or when we remember the hard times? Which proved to be the better teacher?

(1) Which stories do you use more to teach your children lessons? - “When I used to walk to school...20 miles in the snow...uphill both ways!” [hard x’s]

4. It was also designed by God to **Mature us** & **Drive us** back to God!
5. It is only *at the cross*, where our vertical & horizontal relationships intersect!
6. God sends **rain** on all of our lives! - **He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.** Mt.5:45
 - a) On some it is a **mist**, on some it is **sporadic**, on others it is **El Nino**!
 - b) When it rains you really have 2 choices: [1] Stand there, get soaked & complain.
[2] Or, you could be, *“Singing in the Rain!”*
7. Paul dealt with troubles in every direction. **Outside** conflicts & **inner** phobias!(5)
Even Deep dark depression!(6)

D. **Slide#21a Depression & Comfort!** (6,7)

E. (6b) **Downcast Depression:**

F. All of us get depressed from time to time...

1. Sometimes **heavy**, sometimes, **light**, sometimes it **lingers**, other times it **quickly passes**.

G. How do you deal with it?

1. As a Christian do you just deny depression exists?
 - a) **Remember**, just as every day isn’t sunny outside, **so** our lives will have days of clouds & rain showers.
2. Did you think that in becoming a Christian all your problems would be solved?
 - a) Becoming a Christian complicates your life. You now have to deal w/a 2nd nature
3. Did you think that problems are a sign that you are **unspiritual**?
 - a) Though we do reap consequences, the problems might be signs of *spiritual* activity
4. Did you think being exposed to sound biblical teaching automatically **solves** your problems?
 - a) No more than immersing yourself in water makes you a fish! You must be a doer also.

H. **I am exceedingly joyful in all our tribulation** – Paul’s joyful heart didn’t come from “**lack of problems**” but came *“in the midst” of them!*

I. **Slide#21b God Comfort** (6a) - Nevertheless God!!!

J. **Slide#21c Titus Comfort** (6c)

1. We can comfort one another by: **bearing one another’s burdens** (Gal.6:2);
encouraging one another (Heb.10:25); & **ministering to one another** (1 Pet.4:10).

2. **Jesus** sent the disciples out by 2's.
3. **Solomon** said, **Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor.**
4. **Lonely Christians are often *defeated* Christians!**
 - a) When **Elijah** thought he was **the only one faithful** to God...he started to backslide.
 - b) When **Jonah** ministered **alone**, he developed a bitter spirit.

K. **Slide#21d Corinthian Comfort (7)**

1. It was great comfort to **see Titus** again, **but** it was also comforting to hear they had...an **earnest desire** (to see Paul again), they were **mourning** (over their sin), & they had **zeal** for Paul (rekindled love for Paul).
2. It was **also comforting** to **hear** the good news that Paul's letter (*of rebuke*) brought **positive results**(9).

V. **Slide#22 WE'RE SO SORRY, UNCLE ALBERT! (8-12)**

- A. (8) **I made you sorry** – Often rebuke causes **pain** for the moment, but its ultimate object is **not the pain** but **the peaceable fruit of righteousness!**
 1. Heb.12:11 **Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.**
 2. When you have to **rebuke**, check your heart to make sure it is not to "**knock them down**", but to "**lift them up!**" - **Not to discourage**, but to **encourage** them. – **Not simply to eradicate the evil**, but to **make the good grow!**
 3. **Listen for God's reproofs through:** your children, your parents, from teachers, coaches, counselors, from friends, from failures, from Scripture, from sickness, from losses, by disaster, by disappointment.
 - a) **Reproofs come in all shapes & sizes.** Chuck Swindoll, loose paraphrase, pg.115
- B. **Can you relate?** - In the "Dennis the Menace" comic strip, Dennis is kneeling beside his bed saying his prayers. *"I'm sorry, but I've got a whole bunch of 'I'm sorry's for you tonight!"*
- C. There is a big difference between **godly sorrow** & **the sorrow of the world**...it is the difference between **Repentance** & **Regret!**
 1. **Slide#23a Repentance** is from God...**Regret** is from the world.
 2. **Slide#23b Repentance** is a sorrow that draws people closer to God...**Regret** drives people away from God.
 3. **Slide#23c Repentance** brings them to a place of confessing & forsaking sin...**Regret** only brings them into the hand of Satan.
 4. **Slide#23d Repentance** leads to salvation...**Regret** leads to spiritual death.

5. **Peter showed Repentance** - Peter remembered the word of Jesus who had said to him, **Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times. So he went out and wept bitterly.** Mt.26:75
 - a) He showed **Repentance** & was forgiven!
6. **Judas showed Regret** - Then Judas, His betrayer, seeing that He had been condemned, was remorseful and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." And they said, "What is that to us? You see to it!" Then he threw down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed, and went and hanged himself. Mt.27:3-5
 - a) He showed **Regret** & took his own life!
7. The sorrow of the world is only *"resentment that is has been found out!"*
 - a) We ask our kids **"are you sorry for doing it, or for getting caught?"** [As if they are going to say the later?]
 - b) **It's analyzing, If I got the chance to do the same again, & thought I could escape the consequences, would I do it?**
8. **Slide#24** Spurgeon said, **"Let those who *play at repentance* remember that they who repent in mimicry shall go to hell in reality."** (Spurg)
 - a) Some humble themselves for a time, **& yet** never repent before God!
- D. (www) **"Regret** involves the mind primarily **& remorse** involves the emotions. **But repentance** includes **"a change of mind, a hatred for sin, & a willingness to make things right."** If the will is not touched, conviction has not gone deep enough."
 1. **Slide#25** I summed it up this way, **"Remember, Remorse & Regret, Restrict Resolve. Repentance & Restitution Reap Radical Returns!"**

VI. **Slide#26 I HAVE THAT JOY, JOY, JOY, JOY, DOWN IN MY HEART! (13-16)**

- A. (13) **We rejoiced exceedingly more for the joy of Titus because his spirit has been refreshed by you all.**
 1. **You've experienced the joy of seeing someone you love welcomed or well-treated!**
 - a) Your kids welcomed in a new school; an auto accident & someone helping them; meals brought over for your spouse; money sent to one of your children.
 2. **And so** the Father is blessed when **His kids** are taken care of...**Inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.**
- B. (16) **I rejoice** – God's *servant leaders* throughout the bible, & still today, **rejoice** when God's people are obedient & are **burdened** when God's people disobey.
 1. **Slide#27a Moses** often felt like giving up, **because** the people were **rebellious**.
 2. **Slide#27b Jeremiah** wept bitterly over the **hardness** of Israel.

3. Slide#27c **Jesus** Himself wept, **because** the Jews **didn't know** the day of their visitation.
 4. Slide#27d **The writer of Hebrews** says:
 - a) **Remember** those who rule (spiritually) **over you** (13:7)
 - b) **Obey** those who rule over you (13:17)
 - c) **Greet** all those who rule over you (13:24)
- C. Slide#28,29 How do you best express **Joy**?
1. Through *music, singing, laughing, prayer, meditation?*
 2. Whatever your method, express it to the Father...tonight!