

Embracing the Lean Times

TGIF Today God Is First Volume 1, by Os Hillman
03-30-2010

"But blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in Him." - Jeremiah 17:7

Have you ever considered at what point a test becomes so difficult that you decide you can no longer trust in God and you must take over to solve the problem? The prophet Jeremiah describes a situation in which the temptation to solve a financial problem can become so great that we trust in man's way to solve it.

This is what the Lord says: "Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who depends on flesh for his strength and whose heart turns away from the Lord. He will be like a bush in the wastelands; he will not see prosperity when it comes. He will dwell in the parched places of the desert, in a salt land where no one lives. But blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in Him. He will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit" (Jeremiah 17:5-8).

Jeremiah drew a sharp comparison between the man who trusts in his own effort to solve his problem and the man who trusts in God when he cannot see the outcome. The man who trusts in God bears fruit despite the circumstances in his life. He does not shrivel when the heat comes; in fact, his roots go deeper into God's grace. He continues to bear fruit in spite of his circumstances.

Recently, a friend from South Africa explained to me that whenever a plant lives in an arid climate, the roots drive deeper and deeper into the soil to get the water they need. This forces the plant to develop a root system that is far beyond the normal plant because it is forced to go deeper to gain the water it needs. Sometimes God forces us to go deeper into the grace of His love in order to build a greater foundation in our own lives. These lean times are designed to accomplish this in us. If you find yourself in this condition, ask the Lord who provides the water for our soul for the grace you need today to continue to bear fruit in the desert.

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