**Sunshine & Rain**

**Reading – Matthew 5:38-48**

***(Job 4:2-5) “If one attempts a word with you, will you become weary? But who can withhold himself from speaking? {3} Surely you have instructed many, And you have strengthened weak hands. {4} Your words have upheld him who was stumbling, And you have strengthened the feeble knees; {5} But now it comes upon you, and you are weary; It touches you, and you are troubled.***

**An unfair paradox**

Evil practices bring on much suffering.

1. The drunk driver

1. The drug user
2. Diseases of the unrighteous - AIDS

4. Poverty - ***(2 Thessalonians 3:10) For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat.***

5. At the same time we are completely at a loss to explain how a Christian family man who has lost a house or other possessions because he has lost his job or his business fails.

At times, God answers prayers of good people by saying "NO."

***(Matthew 26:39) He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.***

***(2 Corinthians 12:7-8) And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. {8} Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me.***

***(1 Peter 4:12-19) Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; {13} but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy… {15} But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters. {16} Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter. {17} For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? {18} Now "If the righteous one is scarcely saved, Where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?" {19} Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator.***

**TO ACCOMPLISH God’s WILL**

***(Romans 3:25) whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed,***

***(Hebrews 5:7-9) who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard*** [it’s not that He was ignored] ***because of His godly fear, {8} though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. {9} And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him,***

***(Acts 7:54 & 58) When they heard these things they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed at him with their teeth...(Acts 7:58) and they cast him out of the city and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul… (Acts 8:1-4) Now Saul was consenting to his death. At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. {2} And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him. {3} As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison. {4} Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word.***

***(Philippians 1:12-14) But I want you to know, brethren, that the things which happened to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel, {13} so that it has become evident to the whole palace guard, and to all the rest, that my chains are in Christ; {14} and most of the brethren in the Lord, having become confident by my chains, are much more bold to speak the word without fear***.

**TO KEEP ONE HUMBLE**

***(2 Corinthians 11:21-28) To our shame, I say that we were too weak for that! But in whatever anyone is bold; I speak foolishly; I am bold also. {22} Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? So am I. {23} Are they ministers of Christ?; I speak as a fool; I am more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. {24} From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. {25} Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; {26} in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; {27} in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness; {28} besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches.***

***(2 Corinthians 12:7-9) And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. {8} Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. {9} And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. {10} Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake***.

**TO CORRECT GOD'S CHILDREN *(Hebrews 12:5-9) And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: "My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; {6} For whom the LORD loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives." {7} If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? {8} But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. {9} Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live?***

***(Proverbs 22:15) Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; The rod of correction will drive it far from him.***

***(Hebrews 12:10-11) For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness. {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.***

***(Psalms 119:67 & 71) Before I was afflicted I went astray, But now I keep Your word…{71} It is good for me that I have been afflicted, That I may learn Your statutes.***

***(1 Corinthians 11:32) But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.***

***(2 Timothy 3:16-17) All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, {17} that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.***

***(2 Timothy 4:2-4) Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. {3} For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; {4} and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.***

**TO REMIND US Of Our Dual NATURE**

***(2 Corinthians 4:8&16) We are hard pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;… (16) Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day***.

In all things, God is "trying" or testing us to “strengthen” us. It is the Devil who "tempts" to destroy us. ***(1 Peter 1: that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,***