

Pity Parties

*“All day long I have been afflicted, and every morning brings new punishments.
If I had spoken out like that, I would have betrayed your children.
When I tried to understand all this, it troubled me deeply.”*

Psalm 73:14-16 NIV

A pity party is an activity where we feel very sorry for ourselves and the difficulties we face. Some of the Lord’s most godly people have indulged in this form of activity. See Job 3 for an example of a pity party.

While we believe that a pity party is not appropriate for Christians, we certainly understand why we can indulge ourselves in this way. We are all sinners and weak in many aspects. In 1 Peter 5:8 NIV we read, “Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.”

So, because of our sin nature—and the powerful enemy we must face—we have reason to be hesitant in being critical of people who occasionally succumb to feeling sorry for themselves. And, also, we need to be kindly disposed toward ourselves when we hit the skids and slide down the slippery slope of self-pity.

When we find someone in-

dulging in this form of behaviour, our approach to him or her needs to be gentle and considerate. We ought not to beat them over the head with Bible verses written to willfully sinful people. Rather we need to heed to the admonition in Galatians 6:1 NIV where we read, “Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted.”

How often have I dealt with a Christian who has been assaulted by “holier than thou”, graceless Christians who feel they could never be tempted by the sin in which a brother or sister has been caught. Instead of showing the gentle, gracious spirit of Christ, they show sinful behaviour themselves.

When a child of God has fallen into some trap, they need a gentle hand underneath, lifting them up, rather than a foot placed on top of them holding them down.

If you are suffering and thinking like the Psalmist in today’s

verse, do not judge yourself harshly. Instead seek out a gentle Christian who will speak kindly and avoid the harsh judgmental Christians—who will do you more harm than good.

It is so important that you choose wisely the person in whom you confide your sorrow and confusion of mind. As I have said so often in these devotionals, it is better to talk to someone who has walked the path of your sorrow a year or two ago. They have at least been tempted to self-pity, if not been ensnared themselves.

Never forget that, “As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him; for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust.” Psalm 103:13-14 NIV

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