

“... pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart”
2 Timothy 2:22

February 14th, 2021 - The Stockdale Paradox

Randy sent me an article about Admiral James Stockdale I thought was helpful. Stockdale was a prisoner of war in the infamous “Hanoi Hilton,” a prison in Northern Vietnam where American soldiers were brutally tortured. Beaten with fists and fan belts, put in stocks cutting off circulation until the hands turned black, and worse. Many died in that prison.

Stockdale spent 7 and a half years there! When the war was over and he was released, he was asked how he survived. *“I never lost faith in the end of the story. I never doubted not only that I would get out, but also that I would prevail in the end and turn the experience into the defining event of my life, which, in retrospect, I would not trade.”*

When asked what kind of people didn’t survive, his answer was surprising. *“The optimists,”* he said. *“They were the ones who said, ‘We’re going to be out by Christmas.’ Christmas would come and Christmas would go. ‘We’re going to be out by Easter.’ Easter would come and Easter would go. And then Thanksgiving, and then it would be Christmas again. And they died of a broken heart.”*

What was the difference between Stockdale and the optimists? After all, he had hope too. He just said, *“I never lost faith in the end of the story and never doubted I would get out.”* So what’s the difference between that and the “optimists?”

His answer has since become the Stockdale paradox: *“You must never confuse faith that you will prevail in the end — which you can never afford to lose — with the discipline to confront the most brutal facts of your current reality, whatever they might be.”* Wow!

Both the optimists and Stockdale were hopeful for the future, but the optimists used their hope to try to escape their reality or trick themselves into thinking hope would be realized soon. Stockdale had hope, but tried to strengthen the optimists by saying: *“We’re not getting out by Christmas; deal with it!”*

I’m reminded of Paul who had tremendous hope for the future! He said, *“I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.”* (Romans 8:18) He had faith that because of Jesus’ resurrection, he would prevail in the end! But Paul never used that hope to trick himself into thinking his current reality would go away soon. Instead, he used his hope to embrace the suffering of the present moment and allow it to transform him!

“Not only this, but we have confident joy in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance, and perseverance, proven character, and proven character, hope, and hope does not disappoint...” (Romans 5:3-5a).

Paul had hope that he knew would never disappoint him! But it would have disappointed him if he thought that hope was going to be realized on his schedule.

It’s a paradox to maintain hope in the future while facing the reality of the present. *“Sustain me according to your word, that I may live [present], and do not let me be ashamed of my hope [future].”* (Psalm 119:116). Yes we’re going to Heaven, a place where there are no tears, no health problems, no disease, sin or death! But there are plenty of tears to cry now, health problems to pray about, sins to overcome, diseases to fight, and loss to mourn. Jesus could come back tomorrow and rescue us, but we don’t know when He’s coming. So let’s accept the hard reality of what’s in front of us right now and let God use it to shape and mold our character. It’ll make our hope sweeter and more assured.



Sunday Worship Services

9 a.m. Lord’s Supper Service
9:45 a.m. Bible Class
10:45 a.m. Praise & Preaching

Wednesday Bible Classes 7:30 p.m.

Elders

Herb Hinely 407-339-4805
Jeff Hunt 407-739-5266
Joe Rimmer 407-414-7393
Dave Weaver 407-782-1112
Tim Welsh 407-670-8279

Deacons

Matt Hinely, Terry Petty
Erik Quist, Rory Salimbene
Jack Thomas, Terry Tokash
Emory VanCleef

Evangelist

Brian Messerli 407-300-2517
620 Palm Springs Drive
Altamonte Springs
407-831-3230



Dwayne Gandy 2/14/21

Faith Comes by Hearing the Word of God Romans 10:17

Faith comes by hearing and understanding the whole story of the Bible

- Paul wanted people to understand that God's plan _____ included the salvation of Jews and Gentiles.
- God's plan always included a _____ Savior.
- Paul knew that understanding the big picture and build more _____ in believers and potential believers.
- Isaiah prophesied over _____ years before Cyrus was born that he would rebuild a city that had not yet been destroyed and a temple that had not yet been burned down.

Faith comes by hearing and understanding the individual stories in the Bible

The Story of Jehoshaphat surrounded by enemies (2 Chronicles 20:1-30)

- Solomon asked the Lord to help His people when they go to _____.
- God told Solomon that He would _____ that prayer for generations to come.
- Jehoshaphat and the people took a song of _____ to battle with them.
- God started defeating their enemies when they _____ singing to and praising the God of heaven.
- God gave Judah the gifts of _____ and _____!

H2H Group Discussion Questions:

- How has understanding the big picture of the Bible increased your faith?
- What Biblical prophecy and it's fulfillment has been especially helpful in building your faith?
- What individual Bible story has had a significant impact on your faith?
- How can we use the story of the Bible and the stories in the Bible to help others build faith in God?

Announcements

Sunday, February 14th, 2021

Please email all new announcements to announcements@psd.church.

SICK/HEALTH ISSUES:

- **Karisma Quist** is having dizzy spells. They're running tests to see what's causing them.
- **Marilyn Petty's** back surgery went well, but it'll take a few months to recover. There's only one slot left – February 23rd – at TakeThemAMeal.com. Look up Petty (Marilyn) and use the password "psd."
- **Anne Welsh** had minor surgery on her foot and it went well. She still has to stay off of it and keep it elevated.
- **Mike and Kathy Lodge** are in Denver for a few more days so Kathy can get a specialized treatment plan for her lung condition.

FRIENDS AND FAMILY OF PSD:

- **Pat Steele's son, Bruce**, is sick and though he is able to eat now, the doctors are running tests on a mass in his throat.
- **Veronica Petty's coworker's husband Brandon** has fully recovered from COVID-19 and pneumonia!
- **Cindy Vanlandingham's friend Angie's brother, John**, has fully recovered from COVID-19!

TRAVELING:

- **Herb and Tricia Hinely** are out of town for 1 more week.

SHUT-IN:

- **Anne Dickson**
- **Geny Harrison**
- **Peggy Hunt**
- **Bea Deboe**

SPECIAL CONCERNS ABOUT GETTING COVID-19:

- **Carol Van Cleef**
- **Diane Thyben**
- **Mary Ann Rubright**
- **Anna Marcotte**



Word Search for The Woman at the Well

Find the words on the list that are hidden in the puzzle. The words can be left to right, up and down, or diagonally.



T A L I Q U A T U E R I J
S A M A R I T A N D W T A
L L A M C O N S E Q O I C
W O R S H I P D I M M A O
E E E L E X E I I E A U B
O R L M O L O S S S N E R
T I N L N D R C T S T V E
H I A B A P T I Z I N G D
I N S U D E U P I A M V E
R Q U C T N O L S H C T E
S D O K O R E E E L I Q U
T T R E A P U S A I T V U
Y R E T O L L S A V I O R

BUCKET
BAPTIZING
DISCIPLES

JACOB
MESSIAH
REAP

SAMARITAN
SAVIOR
THIRSTY

WELL
WOMAN
WORSHIP