Turning Lemons into Lemonade

Have you ever had a terrible experience that, with the passage of time, ended up being one of the best things to ever happen to you? Two years ago, our then eleven month old son underwent open-skull surgery to fix a condition known as craniosynostosis. The operation took seven hours and left him hospitalized for five days. That kind of trauma is not something anyone would wish on their child, yet it was one of the richest experiences in our family’s history.

Throughout the ordeal, our family rallied together with a sense of unity rarely experienced in everyday life. Relationships were formed with the medical team and other families in the hospital. Best of all, our faith grew tremendously. We prayed more during those five days in the hospital than any other time in our marriage, and the experience instilled a greater appreciation for the love, faithfulness, and grace of our awesome God. The peace we experienced was evident to others and provided a powerful testimony to God’s greatness.

Perhaps you’ve had a similar experience in which God turned life’s lemons into lemonade. One biblical example of this occurred around 445 B.C. The Jews had been conquered and taken into captivity in Babylon; the city of Jerusalem was destroyed. But after 70 years, they were allowed to return and rebuild. Nehemiah led the effort and began by rebuilding the walls of the city. The work was impeded by the constant threat of attack. As a result, half of the people stood guard with spears and swords instead of building. Even the builders worked with one hand and held a weapon in the other. These dangerous working conditions didn’t discourage Nehemiah, however. His response:

*Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes.*

*(Nehemiah 4:14)*

Rather than lamenting the fact that they were rebuilding their city in horrific conditions, Nehemiah instead assumed a positive attitude, focusing on their awesome God and their families.

So what enemy is attacking you right now? Job troubles? A bad medical report? A rebellious child? A failing marriage? The list could be endless, but none of it is catching God by surprise.

Let me remind you, as Nehemiah reminded his people long ago: we have a great and awesome God. And regardless of how you might feel today, you have a family that is worth fighting for. Few things on this earth are more important than familial bonds. And by God’s grace, no enemy is strong enough to break them if you “remember the Lord, who is great and awesome”, and if you are willing to fight for your family. This doesn’t mean the enemy will retreat. It just means that with a godly attitude, you can turn the enemy’s lemons into your lemonade!

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