Feeling Sorry for Yourself

"Not that I complain of want; for I have learned, in whatever state I am, to be content." Philippians 4:11

As a teenager, several years before becoming a Christian, I experienced a hurtful circumstance. This resulted in my feeling sorry for myself. One day as I was dwelling on self-pity it occurred to me that I enjoyed the experience of feeling sorry for myself. That thought terrified me, and at that point I decided I would stop that nonsense.

Most Americans live in a culture that enjoys feeling sorry for themselves. People think they are victims, having been abused by their parents, teachers, friends, or circumstances. They do not like what has happened to them and they pout. Feeling sorry for yourself is a luxury you cannot afford. You do not have to live in self-pity and you do so only because you want to. As you know, the emotions obey the mind and the mind obeys the will. You think about what you want to think about, and if you cease wanting to, you think about something else.

The Bible does not recognize the existence of victims; the word does not even appear in Scripture. God controls the flow of circumstances that invade your life. God says, "I form light and create darkness, I make calamity and create woe – I the LORD do all these things."[1] Concerning the tribulation through which Job went, God said, "Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause."[2]

No one enjoys pain, and God does not expect you to enjoy it, any more than He expected His Son to enjoy the Cross. However, do you acknowledge that God brings pain into your life, and when He does so do you affirm that He is good? Feeling sorry for yourself is a sure indication that you have an unsatisfactory relationship with Christ.

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[1] Isaiah 45:7 [2] Job 2:3