

Lessons From a Fall

As I start this article, I can't help but think of 1 Corinthians 10.12, "Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall." I don't think the writer has the kind of "fall" in mind of which Regena had a few weeks ago, there is some correlation between falling physically and spiritually.

First, falling tends to be unexpected. In our case, we had just completed a walk at Bernheim Forrest and were literally on our way to the car. We already had plans made for what we were doing next. A fall was not in those plans. However, one bad step caused Regena to fracture her ankle and shatter her shoulder. If Hope or I had been aware this about to happen, we would have stopped it. Most of the time, the same is true spiritually or at least our track on the road to sin and apostasy starts out innocently. For instance, King David's sin with Bathsheba did not start out with David going to the roof top with the intention of committing adultery, murder, deceit, and lying, but that is what he ended up doing. I have known a number of good Christians to stray from the faith. Did they intentionally error from the truth? Did they purposefully go into sin? Or did the church at Ephesus intentionally leave their "first love" (Revelation 2.4)? More than likely, no. We need to pay attention to the warning of the Hebrew writer, "Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away." (Hebrews 2:1) Drifting is a gradual and almost effortless way of changing your position. Let us be careful lest fall, drift away, and leave our first love.

Next, time stands still when you or a love one is in pain, it moves slower. Unbeknownst to us at the time, Regena had shattered her shoulder and had a fracture in her left ankle. She was in too much pain to try and move her, which meant waiting on EMS to arrive. It was mentioned the EMS was just down the road and would only be a few minutes. However, that crew was already on a run, so a crew from Shepherdsville responded. I don't know the exact mileage from Bernheim Forrest to Shepherdsville, but it must have been 100 miles longer that day. Falling comes with pain, in this life it will eventually end. Yet, those that refuse to consider the cost of falling or being lost, need to understand the concept of eternal punishment- being in eternal fire and suffering. Hell is a place without clocks, timeouts, and vacations. Jesus in Matthew 25 speaks of the Day of Judgment. He ends with these words, "And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life." (Matthew 25:46) Nothing is worth suffering for eternity.

This gets me to my next point, when in pain you want pain relief. Once at the hospital, a

tech came to do X-rays of Regena's arm, elbow, and shoulder. At this point we knew she was injured but not the extent. Regena had not been given any high-power pain medicine yet and she cried out in pain every time they moved her arm and shoulder. She wanted relief. This reminded me of the story of Lazarus and the rich man. The rich man was in torment, an exceedingly high level of pain. All he wanted was relief. "And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. "Then he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.'" (Luke 16:23-24) Even this modest amount of relief was denied to the rich man. What did Abraham say later on? "Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.'" (Luke 16:29) Abraham did not change the subject but pointed out our relief from hell is the word of God.

As bad as our, especially Regena's experience that day, there were some positives. Her fall could have been far away from help. I heard of a hiker in the Grand Canyon, a few days before, who was injured. It took a day for help to come and that person died due to delayed medical attention. Regena's fall was literally on the main road to the parking lot. We had numerous people that helped us and others who offered help. For example, someone brought their umbrella to keep the hot sun off Regena, someone offered water, nurses and a doctor offered aid. A husband and wife, both in the medical field did the most for us as she assessed the injury and stayed with Regena until the EMS arrived. This world has people who care and will help those in need. As Christians we need to be looking to aid others. Such is what the Bible teaches in regards to our obligation to our fellowman. "Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith." (Galatians 6:10)

We are thankful for everyone's prayers and acts of kindness over the past three weeks. - -
Dennis Tucker