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Facebook

Click on my facebook URL above where you will find my video teachings.

NOTE: I have now recorded 38 videos (and counting) on Facebook, 15 to 20 minutes each, covering my "Pathway to Freedom" seminar.

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CONSTRAINED

Synonyms: Limited, restricted, restrained...

That describes how I've been feeling for several months - - since coming home from the hospital in December and being confined to a wheelchair. The usual experience for all of us ancient folks is that we gradually lose the ability to do things outdoors. For me, the painful losses were: the ability to work in my yard and garden, hiking, biking, golfing, fishing, etc. Thankfully, with my son Terry's help, I'm still able to attend Sunday church at the outdoor service in Kimwood Park.

So I've been thinking about how common it is for us humans during the course of our lives to be limited, restricted, constrained.

Women have been limited in Christian ministry as well as in the professions, and it has taken a very strong woman to break through all the barriers that men have erected against them.

Minorities. My son Chet had some interesting experiences during his mission trip to South Sudan. He said it felt strange to be a white person in a sea of black people, and he and his team felt a lot of hostility from some of the people.

I have some close friends who are missionaries in the far east, and for several years since political tensions have arisen between America and some of those countries - and especially since Covid restrictions have exacerbated the problem - they have been forced to live as recluses. They could not even attend a little Christian church in their community without inviting attention and persecution on the church.

I started my newsletter by mentioning the constraints that age and physical problems have

caused me, but my problems are trivial compared to those of many folks. I have family, friends and acquaintances who have been disabled for much of their lives by a variety of afflictions. God have mercy on them.

You probably know that the Apostle Paul wrote three of his most beautiful letters - Ephesians, Colossians, and Philippians - while he was in prison. Some scholars believe that after Paul was converted on his way to Damascus, he spent the majority of the rest of his life in various prisons because of his faith in Christ. And consider what Paul accomplished even while he was constrained.

And think for a moment about our Lord Jesus. Can there be a more extreme example of someone being constrained than to be nailed to a cross? And he did it willingly for you and me.

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THE FOUR LAWS OF HAPPINESS AND SUCCESS

That's a pretentious title for an article, right? But I guarantee, If anyone will follow these four steps he will be happy and successful. But I don't think it would be fair for me to just give you this secret. You wouldn't appreciate it unless you paid something for it. So as a token of your appreciation, I think it would be nice if you would send me a dollar. (for each of my birthdays)

Actually I got this list from Og Mandino, so freely I received it and freely I'm passing it on to you. And I think this is a timely teaching for anyone who is feeling constrained:

LAW NO. 1 - Count your blessings.

Are you blind? God placed a hundred million receptors in your eyes to enable you to enjoy the magic of a snowflake, an eagle, a cloud, a star, a child....and a look of love.

Are you deaf? God placed 24,000 sensitive fibers in your ears to vibrate to the wind in the trees, the magic of music, and the voice of your children.

Are you mute? You can speak and convey your thoughts as can no other of God's creatures, and your words can bring cheer to the unhappy, comfort to the lonely, and courage to the defeated.

Are you paralyzed? You can stand and run and dance and work, for within you God designed 500 muscles, 200 bones and seven miles of nerve fibers synchronized to do your bidding.

Has your heart stopped beating? Touch your chest and feel its rhythm, pulsating hour after hour, day and night, 36 million beats each year, asleep or awake, pumping your blood through more than 60 thousand miles of veins, arteries and capillaries.

Can you think? Your brain is the most complex structure in the universe. Your brain weighs only three pounds, but it contains 13 billion nerve cells, twice as many cells as there are people on the earth. Implanted within those cells are more than 1,000 billion billion protein molecules. Every incident in your life is imprinted there. And God has dispersed throughout your body four million pain-sensitive structures and more than two hundred thousand temperature detectors.

You are God's finest creation! You possess every blessing necessary to achieve great glory. They are your treasure, your tools with which to build.

Count your blessings.

LAW NO. 2 - Celebrate your rarity.

Never in all the 70 billion humans who have walked the planet earth since the beginning of time has there ever been anyone exactly like you. You were personally designed by the Master Craftsman for his purpose and glory and for your blessing.

Your Creator placed within your mother more than four hundred million infinitely tiny cells. All of them died except one, and that one was invaded by a tiny seed from your father, and you started on your journey into life! Two cells, each containing 23 chromosomes and within each chromosome thousands of genes from your mother and father, all designed to create a unique being, you!

Recognize and celebrate your rarity.

LAW NO. 3 - Go another mile.

The only certain means of success is to render more and better service than is expected of you, no matter what your task may be. This is a habit followed by all successful people since the beginning of time. The surest way to doom yourself to mediocrity is to perform only the work for which you are paid.

There is a pendulum to all life and the sweat you deliver, if not rewarded today, will swing back tomorrow, tenfold. You are not mediocre. To go another mile is a privilege you must appropriate by your own initiative. You can no more render service

without receiving just compensation than you can withhold the rendering of it without suffering the loss of reward. Cause and effect, means and ends, seed and fruit, these cannot be separated.

Don't concern yourself if you serve an ungrateful master. Serve him more. And instead of him, let it be the Lord Jesus that you are serving, for then you will know for certain that every minute, every stroke of extra service will be repaid. And worry not should your reward not come soon. For the longer payment is withheld the better for you. . . and compound interest is this law's greatest benefit.

Go another mile.

LAW NO. 4 - The power to choose.

This is the most amazing gift of all.....free will.....the power to will, to choose, to decide, to act. God gave men and women complete control over their destiny. We are even free to choose whether we go to heaven or hell. It is totally up to us. God already made provision for us to go to heavenif we choose to accept the gift of Christ's death for us on the cross. But we are free to reject that gift if we choose. (That's frightening but true.)

God gave to mankind the power to choose to degenerate into lower forms of life, even lower than animals, but also the power to be reborn into higher forms which are divine (we were created in the image of God).

God gave us the power to think, to love, to will, to laugh, to imagine, to create, to plan, to speak, to pray. So...**choose** to believe, rather than to doubt; to create, rather than destroy; to love, rather than hate; to persevere, rather than quit; to give, rather than hoard; to pray, rather than complain; to live, rather than die.

Never demean yourself again.

Do you want to be happy and successful? It's up to you:

Count your blessings.

Celebrate your rarity.

Go another mile.

Choose life, Christ, and not death.

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LIFE IS DIFFICULT

(I love the way Scott Peck started his book, The Road Less Traveled which was published in 1978. You may have noticed that I regularly quote from books written 30 to 50 years ago, or longer. Actually, I quote from people who wrote 2,000 years ago (Paul, Peter, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John; and 3,000 years ago (David and Solomon);

and 3,500 years ago (Moses). Since truth is timeless I think that the date something was written is irrelevant. Anyway, following is the beginning of Scott Peck's fascinating book with a bit of editing.)

"Life is difficult. This is a great truth. Once we truly know and accept that life is difficult we can transcend it.

"Most do not fully see this truth that life is difficult. Instead they moan more or less constantly, noisily or subtly, about the enormity of their problems, their burdens, and their difficulties as if life were generally easy, as if life *should* be easy. They voice their belief that their difficulties represent a unique kind of affliction that should not have been visited upon them or upon their families, their tribe, their class, their nation, their race, or even their species. I know about this moaning because I have done my share.

"Life is a series of problems. Do we want to moan about them or solve them? Do we want to teach our children to solve them?

"Discipline is the basic set of tools we require to solve life's problems. Without discipline we can solve nothing.

"What makes life difficult is that the process of confronting and solving problems is a painful one. Problems evoke within us frustration or grief or sadness or loneliness or guilt or regret or anger or fear or anxiety or anguish or despair. These are uncomfortable feelings, often as painful as any kind of physical pain. Indeed, it is because of the pain that events or conflicts engender in us all that we call them problems. And since life poses an endless series of problems, life is always difficult and is full of pain as well as joy.

"Yet it is in this whole process of meeting and solving problems that life has its meaning."

I (Glenn) found Scott's book especially interesting because he is a Christian psychiatrist - which sounds to me like an oxymoron - and he describes the resistance that he has encountered as he tried to get his patients to take responsibility for their problems. All of us, counselors, pastors, teachers, parents, have experienced this same resistance. The unfortunate reality is that we have surely encountered this resistance in ourselves as well as in others.

If you have never read this book, I hope you will order a copy from Amazon. If you have read it, I encourage you to read it again.

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NORMAL COST OF LIVING

An article in the Denver Post told about the arrest of a couple who had robbed 15 or 20 convenience stores.. The couple was quite honest about their crime spree and explained to police that they had just been spending the money on day-to-day expenses like motel rooms and drugs.

IN SIBERIA

Alexander Solzhenitsyn recounts in one of his books an experience in the concentration camp where he had been imprisoned for 12 years. He was hoeing the garden on that day during the brief summer season. The ground was as hard as flint, he was hungry, weak and malnourished; he was very sick with cancer; and he was weary of life. When the guard was at the other end of the long garden, he sat down on a wooden bench. He knew the guard would be back in a few minutes, would curse him and drive him back to work. He knew, because he had seen it happen, that if he did not immediately get up and go back to work the guard would either shoot him or club him to death with his rifle butt. He decided to stay on the bench and end his suffering this day.

An old man who was also hoeing had been working his way up to where Solzhenitsyn was sitting and staring at the ground. The old man reached out with his hoe and made a cross in the dirt in front of him. He stared at the cross for a few minutes and as the guard approached he sighed deeply, stood up, and went back to his labor.

If you have been tempted to sit down on a bench and wait it out, look to the cross and be reminded of who you are and Whose you are. Arise, go back to your life, which is your assignment and your ministry. If you are living for the Lord, it is an important ministry for our King.

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DON'T SPIT IN THE FLOWER BED!

(a Garden of Eden story)

(From my Ancient Files)

Dudley Hall shared a story when he spoke in Grand Junction. He said that at a big family get-together at his home, he took all of his grand-children around to the large backyard where he had assembled a big play center with swings, sand boxes, slides, etc. His wife had a small circular flower garden in the backyard. He said to the kids that they were free to play and enjoy themselves. "But," he said in a serious tone, "don't

spit in the flower bed!" Then he repeated it and asked if everyone understood. All the tykes solemnly nodded their heads. Then he went inside the house and hurried to the den where he could peek out and observe his grandkids.

Immediately some of the boys ran up and spat in the flower bed. Some of the kids looked at the flower bed and apparently did some deep thinking, but then spat in the flower bed. Some of the little girls stared at the flower bed for a while, went away to play, came back and stared some more, and finally spat in the flower bed. Ultimately, every one of them spat in the flower bed.

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GUADALAJARA TRIP

(No, I'm not taking any more trips, but forgive me if I reminisce about a trip that Lynne Cumming and I took almost 20 years ago.)

When I go on one of these trips, I feel like Frodo as he wandered through the dark forest: little, inadequate, powerless, not sure who was friend or enemy, observed and confronted now and again by an implacable foe, but also observed and aided by an invisible Ally who for the most part seemed absent, and vaguely aware that his journey was important beyond his dim powers of comprehension. Of course, this also describes the life journey of each of us. But a little mission trip always serves to bring the reality of life into sharp focus.

Because Fred Feller had to cancel, our team was only Lynne Cumming and me. I was so grateful that she came since it meant that we had 2 teams to share the heavy counseling load. On one day when I kept count, my translator and I ministered and prayed with 38 people from morning till late at night, and Lynne's team saw about the same number.

Just for fun let me try to describe the struggle I had in preaching at La Barca, a town of maybe 20,000 people in the Sierra Madre mountains: After counseling people all day we asked the pastor to please hold the worship time to about 30 minutes since my message with translation takes about an hour and then we usually minister to people following the service for another hour or so, and then it was a two-hour drive back to Guadalajara.

The pastor proceeded to do it his way for an hour and 45 minutes, so the congregation was worn out when he called me up to the platform. So I was struggling with feelings of resentment when I

started, and the distractions were absurd: (1) Just as I started to the platform a lady got sick and started vomiting, and her infant started crying at the top of his lungs (2) the young people were at the other end of the building watching a video, and the concrete building carried the sound like the inside of a drum (3) Some sort of fiesta was going on out in the street, with music and firecrackers (4) The microphone stopped working and had to be changed four times during the service (5) A little boy of 3 or 4 years walked up and down the steps and across the platform in front of me continuously during the whole message (6) The moment I walked up to start my message, a number of people got up, gathered up their coats and packages, and walked out. A number of the people who remained went to sleep the moment I started talking. (How anyone can sleep during such an inspiring message is beyond me.)

(7) I became so confused and distracted at one point that I stopped to pray silently and asked the Lord if I could walk off the platform and go home, but I felt I should persevere. At the end of the service I gave an invitation, and much to my amazement about 15 people came forward to receive Christ. Then I gave an invitation to receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and about 20 or 25 came forward.

Do you suppose, is it conceivable, is it remotely possible, that the enemy was involved in all that distraction?

During the course of our 3 weeks in Guadalajara, we ministered to 6 or 8 couples that were having difficulties. In each case, at the conclusion of the ministry time we led them through a brief remarriage service.....and saw lots of tears and laughter.

We also saw some dramatic physical and emotional healings. God is awesome!

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I would like to thank each of you for your support of this ministry.
If any of you want to receive tax credit for your financial contributions, you may send them to:
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