

Daily Devotional, May 19, 2020 Carp Away, But Pray!

Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Romans 12:12

Yesterday I talked about the flooding that was beginning to develop in our neighborhood. Today, I'm afraid it is much worse. In fact, for the sake of a few of our neighbors a block from us, they have every right to "carp" about it. The [verb to carp](#) is synonymous with *to complain*. However, where complaining is usually understandable, *carping about something* is complaining to the extent that it annoys others and may make people uncomfortable. In this case, neighbors, *carp away, but pray!*

Laura left the house today to do some quick shopping, only to return about 5 minutes later. "There's a bunch of muskie in our neighbor's yard!" I looked at her incredulously. "What?" I exclaimed. "What are you talking about? Muskie?" "Right down the street, you know where those houses are under water? They're swimming all over the lawn, and they're big!" I immediately got in the car with her and we drove to the next corner. There were 2 trucks parked at the corner in front of a barricade that the Village of Wauconda had set up to block traffic from entering the flooded street. Sure enough, there were some very large fish swimming in 1-2 feet of water all over that neighbor's lawn. Water that had spilled over the seawall behind their house and their adjoining neighbors'. But they weren't muskie. (So much for my dear wife's knowledge of fish species.) They were carp! And they were not little, some were over 2 feet long! I watched in amazement for about 15 minutes with a few others who were equally amazed. Other vehicles stopped, their drivers gazing at the spectacle.

Dozens of carp coming and going across the lawn, in groups of as many as 5 at a time. As unbelievable as this whole scene was, I was suddenly struck by the realization that the 2 houses that sat side by side had more than 1 foot of water inside of their garages, and Lord knows how much in their basements, or even in their upper rooms. Our hearts go out to them. Such a tragedy!

Tragedy can strike anyone. When it does, you may feel as if you have no hope. You may wish you could just die and get it over with. But even after tragedy has devastated your life, God will redirect your course toward a better future. Consider a good man who lived long before all of us.

Though he was a righteous man, Job lost everything. His 10 children were killed, and he lost his riches and health. All this happened in a matter of days! He was left with a despairing wife and three friends who blamed him for his own misfortune. Job cried out, ***"If only my anguish could be weighed . . . and all my misery be placed on the scales . . . that God would be able to crush me . . . What strength do I have, that I should still hope? What prospects, that I should be patient?" Job 6:2, 9, 11 (NIV)***

Job had plenty to carp about. But, what he didn't know, was that the end of his life would be even better than the beginning. God restored everything he had lost, and then some. The Bible says, ***"the Lord restored his fortunes and gave him twice as much as he had before. And so Job died, an old man and full of years." Job 42:10, 17 (NIV)***

Are you grieving the loss of someone you love? Maybe due to the many shut downs, you've lost your job and can't provide for your family. Maybe you see no purpose in your life right now, loneliness and anxiety are getting the best of you. Even when you're pressed to the point of death, you can rightfully hope that God will redirect the course of your life. Never give up hope, but instead, trust in God's provision. When we remain faithful, turning our troubles and misfortunes over to God in prayer, we find that God is *always* faithful.

Prayer: Lord, misfortune surrounds me, and I am afraid of what the future holds. I don't know if I can face the challenges ahead of me today, for the burden feels so heavy. Lend me your strength and help support me, that I may walk like Jesus through all of this uncertainty. I trust only in you. In you I find my strength. In Christ's name I pray. Amen.

Before God changes our circumstances, He wants to change our hearts. – Warren Wiersbe