

CIRCUMSTANCE, CIRCUMSTANCES

Under the Mosaic Law, a wife could leave (divorce) her husband under certain **circumstances**. (Specifically, the wife was free to leave if her husband stopped providing her with food, clothing, or sex.)

- **Exodus 21:10-11:** "If he take him another wife; her food, her raiment, and her duty of marriage, shall he not diminish. And if he do not these three unto her, then shall she go out free without money."

Under normal **circumstances**, the avenger of blood would kill people who accidentally killed someone else. (That's why those people needed to flee to a city of refuge, so they would be protected.)

- **Numbers 35:12:** "And they shall be unto you cities for refuge from the avenger; that the manslayer die not, until he stand before the congregation in judgment."

Saul was quick to kill people for little or no reason, without first inquiring about the **circumstances**. (Executing someone for eating food is incredibly harsh.)

- **1 Samuel 14:39:** "For, as the LORD liveth, which saveth Israel, though it be in Jonathan my son, he shall surely die. But there was not a man among all the people that answered him."

Under normal **circumstances**, all of the priests weren't sanctified at all times. Instead the priests took turns serving.

The priests were divided into 24 courses (divisions) so that everyone had an opportunity to serve and no one was overworked.

- **2 Chronicles 5:11:** "And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place: (for all the priests that were present were sanctified, and did not then wait by course:"

Circumstances prevented Hezekiah from keeping the Passover in the first month of the year (which is when it was supposed to be kept).

- **2 Chronicles 30:1-3:** "And Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah, and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, to keep the passover unto the Lord God of Israel. For the king had taken counsel, and his princes, and all the congregation in Jerusalem, to keep the passover in the second month. For they could not keep it at that time, because the priests had not sanctified themselves sufficiently, neither had the people gathered themselves together to Jerusalem."

We must praise God, regardless of our **circumstances**.

- **Psalms 71:10, 14:** "For mine enemies speak against me; and they that lay wait for my soul take counsel together, ... But I will hope continually, and will yet praise thee more and more."

What matters isn't the image that people project, but the reality of their **circumstances**. (God isn't impressed by people

who pretend to be great but have nothing.)

- **Proverbs 12:9:** "He that is despised, and hath a servant, is better than he that honoureth himself, and lacketh bread."

Some people aren't honest about their **circumstances**. (There are some people who pretend to be rich, but actually have nothing.)

- **Proverbs 13:7:** "There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing: there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches."

The attitude of your heart is more important than your **circumstances**.

- **Proverbs 15:15:** "All the days of the afflicted are evil: but he that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast."

The attitude of your heart isn't a reflection of your **circumstances**. Instead your attitude determines how you interpret your circumstances, and how you let them affect you.

- **Proverbs 15:15:** "All the days of the afflicted are evil: but he that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast."

It's possible to have a merry heart in spite of terrible **circumstances**.

- **Proverbs 15:15:** "All the days of the afflicted are evil: but he that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast."

What matters the most isn't our **circumstances** in life, but our attitude. A bad attitude can turn a good day into a bad one, and a good attitude can bring forth joy even in difficult circumstances.

- **Proverbs 15:15:** "All the days of the afflicted are evil: but he that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast."

The **circumstances** of the meal matter more than the food. It's better to eat bad food in peace than rich food in strife.

- **Proverbs 17:1:** "Better is a dry morsel, and quietness therewith, than an house full of sacrifices with strife."

There are no **circumstances** where someone who has done that which is right and just may be punished.

- **Proverbs 17:26:** "Also to punish the just is not good, nor to strike princes for equity."

We need to take action, even in imperfect **circumstances**, because we don't know what God is doing. (If we wait for perfect knowledge then we'll never do anything. God commands us to act, not wait for better circumstances.)

- **Ecclesiastes 11:1-2, 4-5:** "Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days. Give a portion to seven, and also to eight; for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth. ... He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap. As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is

with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all."

Jeremiah said that God had walled up his path with stone so he couldn't escape, and put him on a crooked path. (In other words, Jeremiah was trapped in terrible **circumstances** and God wouldn't allow him to be freed from them.)

- **Lamentations 3:9:** "He hath inclosed my ways with hewn stone, he hath made my paths crooked."

If a priest approached a dead body (even under **circumstances** where that was allowed), it defiled him. He had to be cleansed and then wait for seven days before returning to his holy work.

- **Ezekiel 44:25-26:** " And they shall come at no dead person to defile themselves: but for father, or for mother, or for son, or for daughter, for brother, or for sister that hath had no husband, they may defile themselves. And after he is cleansed, they shall reckon unto him seven days."

Habakkuk said that he would rejoice in the Lord regardless of his **circumstances** or personal needs.

- **Habakkuk 3:17-18:** "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation."

God isn't limited by our **circumstances**. He's able to keep His promises no matter what the situation is (and He *always* keeps His promises).

- **Zechariah 8:6:** "Thus saith the LORD of hosts; If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days, should it also be marvellous in mine eyes? saith the LORD of hosts."

The Jews had to step out on faith and lay the foundation of the second temple in spite of their terrible **circumstances**. They didn't lay the foundation of the second temple in prosperous times.

- **Zechariah 8:9-10:** "Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Let your hands be strong, ye that hear in these days these words by the mouth of the prophets, which were in the day that the foundation of the house of the Lord of hosts was laid, that the temple might be built. For before these days there was no hire for man, nor any hire for beast; neither was there any peace to him that went out or came in because of the affliction: for I set all men every one against his neighbour."

The Jews had to start rebuilding the second temple before their **circumstances** would change. They first had to obey the Lord and then He would bless them.

- **Zechariah 8:11:** "But now I will not be unto the residue of this people as in the former days, saith the LORD of hosts."

Gamaliel told the council that if the disciples weren't from God

then nothing would come of what they were doing, and therefore there was no reason to oppose them. (This was spectacularly *terrible* advice. Evil people can inflict all sorts of harm if they're not stopped. Under no **circumstances** should the wicked be left alone on the grounds that since they're not of God they'll eventually fail. The reason the disciples should have been left alone was because they were *very obviously* doing the work of God, and opposing God is *always* wrong.)

- **Acts 5:38:** "And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought:"

Paul's conversion to Christianity brought great suffering into his life. It didn't make his life **circumstances** better or increase his wealth.

- **Philippians 3:8:** "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,"

Christians must be content regardless of their **circumstances**. We should be content in both good and bad situations, and in both rich and poor situations.

- **Philippians 4:12:** "I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need."

Christians must always follow that which is good, no matter the **circumstances**.

- **1 Thessalonians 5:15:** "See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men."

The church must be characterized by rejoicing. This is true regardless of the **circumstances** the church is going through.

- **1 Thessalonians 5:16:** "Rejoice evermore."

It's God's will for us to be thankful, regardless of our **circumstances**.

- **1 Thessalonians 5:18:** "In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."

The peace that God wants Christians to have isn't connected to their **circumstances**. (Peter found peace when facing crucifixion.)

- **2 Peter 3:14:** "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless."

God knows our **circumstances**. He knows what's going on in our life.

- **1 John 3:20:** "For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things."