

Study to Stutter
Proverbs 21:31

I “stutttterr” at times. I have for years now. Enjoyably, even as I write this, the automatic Microsoft word check has a note that the word I just wrote is not a word, easy for it to say. The affliction does not always occur, only at a few moments. I did not speak haltingly years ago but recently I do. I do not know why. I do not want it.

There are times when I cannot think of the specific word, it won't come or I can't say it. I know how to describe the word but the word, the simple word, eludes me. Yes, it is embarrassing. But more, it is embarrassing in front of a crowd when I am speaking. My church is so gracious about it. They listen and keep listening till I get the word or I describe it so they understand what I want to say. Sometimes they speak out the word so I can get on with the thought or point. These brothers and sisters are wonderful about it.

But why am I telling you this? Several reasons. There is a belief that if you do your part than God must do His. (Spiritual Capitalism)! Not necessarily so. For a pastor, his ministry is to study in order to equip the flock. This equipping demands teaching, usually. Inherent to this joy of mine is the incumbent issue of, “I give, then God promises to give to me. I have found so many times that statement to be false.

Some of the most fluid sermons have come after a busy week and I haven't studied, as I want. But the opposite also is true, studying and then on to stammering. So why does God do that at times? Why does He call us to do things then hampers us in that commission He gave? Because Preparation and Providence are separate matters.

When Solomon wrote this proverb, I am sure that he did not stutter but he saw a principle in a different situation. His realm was war. He realized that even though he did the diligent groundwork, God still worked the end. It is not a bargaining sell with God but a relinquishing of the ownership even if it is paid for. That is God's right to give or not. That is God's grace. We cannot obligate grace, or it is no longer grace.

I also tell you this in order for you to be the gracious responder. Your heart in this matter is key to the giving of grace. God might withhold grace to one and

give it another for the blessing of the former and latter. Another reason, God may desire to humble one so He give more grace afterward.

This last Sunday was a “stuttering” sermon day. It was hard to get through it. We had visitors. For a small church, oftentimes we have one chance to bless them. I know some have not come back because of my affliction. But after the sermon I was telling a new attendee friend, “Man, I could not get my words today”. It was an obvious and usual statement. But her response was neither, “I know you were, and I started praying for you”. She’ll never know how much the meant. A weakness prompted prayer for grace to me. I saw my disgust of stuttering turn to gratitude for such a word of equipping.

So remember, today and other days, God gives weakness for His kingdom. Yes, you have to remind yourself countless times of this truth, I know, I do. But deliverance is not always ours. Ours is to prepare and wait. He is good. Always. Trust Him. See all the colors of His rainbow in your sky, after the rain stops or continues.

*Horses are to be ridden but the reins are His to turn. So saddle up and enjoy the ride.
You may find another barn more suitable to your riding, and others, yours.*