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An Undesirable Outcome

By Teresa Hampton

Mom and Dad came to visit recently. I quickly noticed that Mom's bottom lip was swollen on one side, so I asked what happened. She said, "You're not going to believe this..." and then began telling her story.

But first a little background information. Mom and Dad are the primary caregivers for my younger sister, a stroke victim. About eight months after the stroke, their house flooded. They were displaced for four months, but were now settling in. They finally purchased new furniture and the house was beginning to feel like home again, except Mom could not find a reclining chair for my sister, who is unable to use her right hand. Handlevers are always on the right side, you know.

So, Mom made a sling, of sorts, that she could use with the left hand to pull up the right handlever. Of course, she tested it first, but it slipped and she socked herself in the mouth! It was painful at the moment. She was trying to do a good deed and it failed. But now, in true Mildred fashion, she was laughing hysterically, though the laughter obviously made her wince.

It reminded me of times when people tried to do something good, but ended up with a swift "smack in the face." It didn't turn out quite right. Perhaps it was a Bible study with a non-Christian that failed to persuade him/her, or ruined a friendship. Maybe it was a good work that someone cast with an ulterior motive. In either situation, or in other situations, an undesirable outcome made one question the value of continuing to do a good work.

Paul spoke to Christians who may have had these doubts. They were teaching and serving others, only to be rejected and persecuted. He wrote, *To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power, so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ* (2 Thess. 1:11-12).

When we are trying to do good and the outcome is undesirable, or if in the process of doing good we feel as if we've been "smacked in the face," let us take note of Paul's words and remember that Jesus is glorified in us. And we will be glorified having fulfilled our purpose as God's children.

Today's Verse: *And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap, if we do not lose heart. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, and especially to those who are of the household of faith* (Galatians 6:9-10).

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