

I Wish You Bad Luck

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By Dave Havir

BIG SANDY, Texas—In my circle of life, I am associated with people who are interested in helping people (including family, friends, neighbors and co-workers) to deal with the challenges of life. While we enjoy the many blessings that God bestows upon us, we understand that our Heavenly Father allows people to face challenges and trials.

We believe that God has promised to help people through those challenges and trials.

Two popular theories

Before we go any further, I want to briefly state my objection to two popular theories among many religious people.

■ I don't believe in the "health-and-wealth" gospel.

The premise of that theory is twofold. First, if you obey God, you will be healthy and wealthy. Second, if you are unhealthy and poor, the reason is because you did not obey God.

Notice Philippians 3:8-10 and 1 Peter 4:15-16.

■ I don't believe in the "name-it, claim-it" view of faith.

The premise of that theory is that a person should dogmatically claim something from God and He is required to give it. While I believe in the importance of communicating with God and in the power of faith, I don't think that religious people should be bossing God around. (Can you imagine physical parents being required to acquiesce to the demands of 2-year-olds, 16-year-olds or 20-year-olds?)

It is true that the Son of God taught people to be persistent in prayer (Luke 11:1-8 and Luke 18:1-8). Think about it. Persistence in prayer is important because the Father (who is in charge of the family) allows His children to express their desires with Him—in an effort to convince Him, not demand from Him.

Notice 2 Corinthians 12:8-10.

Helpful words

As I mentioned earlier, I am associated with people who are interested in helping people face their challenges.

Recently at an interactive Bible study, one of my friends recommended that the audience become familiar with a speech given by Chief Justice John Roberts on June 3, 2017, during his son's ninth-grade commencement at Cardigan Mountain School (a New Hampshire boarding school for boys in grades six through nine).

The speech has been advertised with a phrase from the speech—"I Wish You Bad Luck." I want to quote from a portion of the speech.

"Now, the commencement speakers will typically also wish you good luck and extend good wishes to you. I will not do that, and I'll tell you why.

"From time to time in the years to come, I hope you will be treated unfairly, so that you will come to know the value of justice. I hope that you will suffer betrayal because that will teach you the importance of loyalty.

"Sorry to say, but I hope you will be lonely from time to time so that you don't take friends for granted.

"I wish you bad luck, again, from time to time so that you will be conscious of the role of chance in life and understand that your success is not completely deserved and that the failure of others is not completely deserved either.

"And when you lose, as you will from time to time, I hope every now and then, your opponent will gloat over your failure. It is a way for you to understand the importance of sportsmanship.

"I hope you'll be ignored so you know the importance of listening to others, and I hope you will have just enough pain to learn compassion.

"Whether I wish these things or not, they're going to happen. And whether you benefit from them or not will depend upon your ability to see the message in your misfortunes."