

Melva's Corner

DEMOLITION!

(God's Way To Restoration)

October 16, 2006

(John 16:33 NIV)

Central Truth: Rest assured that God never tears down unless He has plans to build us up again.

Life can be full of all sorts of destructive moments:

A marriage ends.

A job is lost.

A child gets sick.

You suspect your spouse of being unfaithful.

Your church lets you down.

You're caught in a lie.

You face the shame of having secret sin discovered.

The facade of your existence starts to crack and fall away in chunks. The ugliness under the surface starts to show through. But, what Satan intends for harm, God can use to begin remodeling. What others intend to hurt you, God can use to rebuild your life.

I met a man last week whose comfortable life was destroyed by a prison term. He violated his parole a year ago and was sent back to prison. Now he's out again, desperately trying to restart his life. He's living in his mother's run-down house in a dangerous neighborhood. Yesterday he had only thirty cents to his name. He's facing a winter with no heat, electricity, or job. Through a mixture of bad choices his life has been stripped down to the studs. His life, as it is, is unlivable.

If you're in the same boat, then here's where you need to start paying attention. If God takes a sledge to your life, it's because He knows you're worth saving. He sees that some renovation is in order. No one renovates something that's worthless, right? You

can only renovate something when you have a vision for the finished project — when you know what you want it to look like and what it could look like. When God looks at you, He doesn't just see the sin, failure, weakness, and ugliness that mar each of us. He sees what we can look like when He's through with renovation. He sees us as He hopes we'll be some day: clean and solid and useful.

Sometimes, however, He has to do some demolition before construction begins. Pride needs to be ripped out of us. Self-centeredness needs to be pounded into shards on the floor. Anger needs to be softened. Lust eliminated. The corrupt parts of us cut away. Demolition, make no mistake, is a painful process. It requires that we endure a lot of pounding, noise, and dust. It requires us to accept the idea that, for a time, things may look worse before they look better. It calls for patience and endurance. It especially requires that we trust in God's vision for what He wants us to be. It requires us to like that vision of ourselves better than we like our lives now.

Rest assured that God never tears down unless He has plans to build us up again. Understand that demolition is just the beginning of His work of renovation in our hearts, minds, and spirits. Do you think that the apostle Paul enjoyed his Damascus Road experience, that Samson enjoyed his Philistine prison, or that Joseph appreciated an Egyptian jail? Do you think that David enjoyed running for his life for all those years? Do you imagine that Jesus enjoyed the desert, Gethsemane, and Calvary? But they each endured. They continued to seek God in their crises. They learned to trust Him even as He took a sledgehammer to their lives. In the end, they were transformed to match the vision that God carried in His heart long before He had begun His work in them.

Endure and seek God. Trust Him even as His sledgehammer destroys your pretension, false idols, and bogus security. Trust Him even as He strips you down and picks you apart. Trust that you go through nothing in His hands that won't add beauty, usefulness, and value to you for the long run. Trust that if He destroys something, then it needed destroying. Trust that He knows what He's doing and that He will get it done in His own time and in His own way.

Hold onto your faith, worship God, and wait for the dust to clear. You'll be amazed at the renovation He's doing in you!

Scriptural References:

"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world" (John 16:33 NIV).