

This is the Day...Thursday

January 6, 2022

A Questionable Answer

“What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but gave Him up for us all – how will He not also, along with Him, graciously give us all things?” (Romans 8:31-32)

As a young child, my parents were always very patient and understanding with me. Trust me, I did my share of dumb things and certainly deserved every punishment I received and more. But Mom and Dad were willing to extend a lot of grace and usually would take the time to discuss my behavior in the hopes that I would learn a lesson and not do it again. Often that discussion began with some questions from Mom or Dad. I learned that if I answered their questions honestly and succinctly, they would usually become satisfied and move on. But it took me a while to learn that lesson and often I would escalate the problem by the way I answered their questions. Especially, if I answered a question with a question.

For example, one summer afternoon, I found an old bowling ball out in the field up the street from my house. I had never been bowling at the time, but I knew it was a bowling ball because of the finger holes. I was amazed at how heavy the ball was and thought it would be a great idea to take the ball to the middle of the street and let it roll down the hill in front of our house. I thought it would be cool to see how fast it went and how far it would go. A couple of my friends saw me as I carried the ball to the middle of the road, and they were cheering me on as I let the ball begin to roll.

It was amazing to watch the ball quickly pick up speed. Then something unexpected occurred. The ball began to bounce, higher and higher down the road. The ball veered into the neighbor's yard, did a glancing blow against the front of the neighbor's car, bounced further down the street, over a neighbor's fence and came to a stop against a tree in the neighbor's backyard, right beside their toddler playing on his swing set. As soon as Mom found out what I had done, the questioning began, and the first question was her typical. “Why did you do that?” That is when I made a grave mistake and learned a valuable lesson. I answered Mom's question with a question. “Are you going to make me stay inside?” Then Mom asked another question and, again, I answered with a question. “What are you going to take away from me as punishment?” With each questionable answer, Mom became angrier.

I learned it is never appropriate to answer a question with a question. In the book of Romans, Paul asked a question that everyone should carefully ponder before answering. If God is for us, who can be against us? He already gave us His own Son for us. But sometimes we still question God. Somehow, it is not enough that He gave His own Son. We still answer the question with a question. Can death or life be against us? Can angels or demons? Can height or depth or anything in creation come against us? Don't make the mistake of answering a question with a question. If we believe God is for us, then we believe nothing can come against us. That is the answer.