

Untying Knots

In my haste to dress for the day, I leaned over to tie my shoe and alas, my shoelaces were in a knot. I have not had this hard of a time untying a knot since I was a boy. I fretted, picked, and pried until I finally untied the knot. As I was already in a kneeling position I found praying became an easy segue. While involved in this medial project of untying and tying my shoes, this Pastor's Word was birthed.

Murphy's law (if something can go wrong, it will go wrong) is almost always in play when we were in a hurry. As I was trying in my exasperation to untie my knotted shoestrings, I was thinking how much easier this would be if this were a less busy time. Well, I didn't have time to think what I would do if I only had more time. I needed to get out the door, therefore on with the task! I did untie my knot, got out the door and met my schedule. As I now look back at this menial conundrum, it seems the Lord has taken that singular moment of a very busy day to teach me something about knots, yes even the mangled, tangled knots of life.

1. Knots are managed better when we relax.

There is an old saying, "the hurried-er I go, the behind-er I get." How true! It's the proverbial catch 22: if I don't hurry, I won't make my appointment. If I don't slow down, I'll never get this knot untied. I became all thumbs; the shoelaces in my knot actually tightened up. I was (I am ashamed to admit it) getting angry at my shoelaces. I was ready to take Alexander the Great's remedy over the Gordian Knot. He took his mighty sword and clave the knot in two. It may have made him king over all Asia, according to the legend, but had I taken my pocketknife to this shoestring, all I would have managed to do would have been to incapacitate myself from wearing the very shoes I was trying to put on.

How often in our scurry we incapacitate ourselves from enjoying some of God's choicest blessings. Habakkuk 2:3 says, "...*Though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come...*" Good things, including God's best, come to those who wait. "*But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength...*" (Isaiah 40:31).

I found as I relaxed, my hands were steadier, my concentration was intensified and I could see better. And this leads me to the next point:

2. Knots are untied when we observe the knot.

As I decidedly slowed down, I found I could see the knot better. I could see how one string went over and another went under. I could see how one part connected to another. I could see how if I pulled in this direction it would loosen, and so it did.

Sometimes our life is knotted up. To untie knots, it would do us well to step back and see where the tangled strings came from and are going. A marriage needs to breathe at times. Rarely will feuding over opinions help. This just ties the knot stronger. A trip, a retreat or a simple date night with your spouse can give you the ability to step back and see the problem more clearly. How precious to allow God to reveal what needs to be done and then do it together. "*For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light*" (Psalm 36:9).

3. u>KKnots are always removed when we take them to Father.

In my youth, I lost count of the times that I took my knotted shoelaces to my dad. With his patient hands he never failed at untying my knots. I can see him working on my knot, with a determined, serious face. Then, as he continued to work, his stern expression melted into a smile and even before I could see what was happening I knew he was getting it done! My dad, my hero...my knot-untier! As he held the two loosened ends, he would hand me the shoes and kindly say, "There you go, Johnny-boy." As I tightened my shoes to go

out and play, I would say, “Thanks, Dad.” And he would answer, “Anytime son, anytime!” I knew he meant it. I can never recall Dad ever refusing to untie my knots. I also can never recall him not being able to untie my hardest knots.

Do I write these words to someone who has tried everything and everyone? Perhaps it is time to bring your tangled life to the Father. He will take the time and delight in doing so.

The Bible says of the maniac of Gadara, *“there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time...”* (Luke 8:27). His life was knotted *“of a long time.”* But when the wild man came to Jesus, he was tamed! I like the way the Bible puts it: *“Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind...”* (Luke 8:35).

A father cried out, *“Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatic, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water”* (Matthew 17:15). Here is a young man with no control over his body, but when brought to the Lord, he is helped and healed. All knots brought to the Everlasting Father are undone by His marvelous grace.

Yesterday my wife and I were talking to my mother-in-law and she was telling about a conversation she had just had with her cousin. Her cousin wanted to talk about the fact that her sister was dying. At times of death, even for God’s children, it becomes difficult, a most overwhelming knot. Our Father never fails to come through. I love this statement I heard from Dr. James Merritt about how God handles His children when very sick, *“The Lord will either take the illness from you or eventually take you from the illness.”* There are no knots, even the death-knot, too hard for the Lord to handle! *“Ah Lord GOD! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee”* (Jeremiah 32:17).

- Pastor Pope -

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