

## Lessons from the Fires of Inconvenience

Philippians 2:3,4

Intro: Deep down inside most of us there is an ache for a happiness that seems just out of reach. We seem to have the idea that we might find this happiness when our life is running when and how we think it should be.

In other words we are happy when our applecart is right side up. We are not very happy when that applecart is upset with some inconvenience or other. We live in an age that thrives on convenience. The high demand for convenience is largely due to the fact that we live under the tyranny of the urgent and the rapid hustle and bustle of life.

For example, we have convenience stores where we can pick up several things at one time and one location, gas, food, maps, loaf of bread, jar of mayonnaise etc. without having to spend extra time and the inconvenience of having to go to the grocery.

Did you know that the top 100 convenience store chains in NA have a total of 29,695 stores. 7-11 is the leader and they have 5,622 stores. Looks like we are really convenience minded with that many stores in just the top 100 chains wouldn't you say? On top of that, we have drive up coffee shops, drive up banks, drive up Mc Donald's and Wendy's as the list goes on and on.

There is a website I found called Oddee which is an entertainment blog on oddities, and attracts well over two million unique visitors each month. Here are some of the listings of their most unique drive through attractions

- Emergency Room Drive-Thru
- Wedding Chapel Drive-Thru
- *Prayer Booth Drive-Thru*

I read where there are actually some funeral homes that have drive up viewing. An article in the NY Times 1989 reads "The convenience and high technology of drive-through banks and hamburger places have come to the funeral world.

A Chicago funeral home has set up a drive-through service with cameras and a sound system that lets on-the-go visitors pay their respects, sign the funeral register and view the remains of the loved one round the clock without ever leaving the car.

Carloads of working people pressed for time as well as busloads of senior citizens confined to wheelchairs have paraded through the drive-in at Gatling's Funeral Home on the city's South Side, to see the images of embalmed friends and relatives on a television screen covered by a white canopy that is lit up at night.

The owner, Lafayette Gatling, a former construction worker who says he used to feel uncomfortable himself paying his respects in soiled work clothes, added the drive-through service two years ago.

"The working person doesn't have time to come in," Mr. Gatling said. "They want to see the body but they don't want to have to wait. He concludes, I always thought there should be some way they could see the body any time they want."

Well whatever you say, I suppose the main belief of most people is, don't mess up my plans and don't mess with my time because, in case you didn't know, the world revolves around me and my schedule.

This morning let's tackle the frustrating issue of being inconvenienced. Let's begin by looking at

## I. Definitions

Inconvenience is described as something that causes anxiety, trouble, etc. It is something that makes us uncomfortable. Something that happens to us when we are forced to change our carefully laid out plans.

Basically being inconvenienced is a result of selfishness and arrogance. How dare they change things on me. An example for many, esp. non believers, is death. Death is an inconvenience that we dislike especially when we are living busy lives, but death has a way of changing plans doesn't it? The same could be said for sickness and a variety of other things

## II. Examples of inconvenience

How about this example to get us started? Romans 5:8 reminds us *But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.* II Corinthians 5:21 also says *He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

Here is a Dottie Rambo Song that shows us the amount of inconvenience that a perfect Jesus was willing to endure just so we, poor wretched sinners **deserving only of an eternal hell**, could go to a **totally undeserved heaven**.

V 1 He left the splendor of heaven,  
Knowing His destiny,  
Was the lonely hill of Golgotha,  
There to lay down His life for me.

Chorus

If that isn't love;  
The ocean is dry,  
There's no stars in the sky,  
And the sparrow can't fly.  
If that isn't love;  
Then heaven's a myth,  
There's no feeling like this,  
If that isn't love!

V 2 Even in death He remembered,  
The thief hanging by His side;  
There He spoke with love and compassion,  
Then He took him to paradise.

Chorus

If that isn't love;  
The ocean is dry,  
There's no stars in the sky,  
And the sparrow can't fly.  
If that isn't love;  
Then heaven's a myth,  
There's no feeling like this,  
If that isn't love!

Yes, and many people are not willing to be inconvenienced by receiving the gift or trying to act like Jesus did in fulfilling the Golden Rule. I think it goes something like this Be inconvenienced for others once in a while as you would like for them to do for you.

III. Probable facts about inconvenience

I would suggest and ask you to think about the following probable facts

- A. It is not an inconvenience if the person feels the desired result they will receive is greater than the cost to reach it even if there are periods of inconvenience along the way.
- B. For me to keep from being inconvenienced most generally means an inconvenience to another person or persons as they have to change their plans or schedules so they won't mess mine up.

IV. The language of inconvenience

An example: Someone says lets do something to which another person replies with this sort of language. I was planning to do this or that or I can help at a different time, which means, they do not, or are not willing to take your thoughts or desires into account.

This language simply means that when that particular time comes along someone is going to be inconvenienced. Either the person with the original thought, plan or idea **OR** the person with the later thought or plan and hopefully it won't be us.

V. Tools to help avoid inconvenience First,

#### A. Remember others

None of us should ever forget that this world does not revolve only around us. This might be a blow to our ego, but it is true none the less. It could be thought of in this light. Why is it that when the other guy in front of me in the express check out lane has five items over the limit, and writes a check instead of paying with cash, he's inconsiderate, but when I do it, it's because I'm in a hurry and have a good reason? When my wife is late getting ready, it's because she didn't plan her time well, but when I'm late it's because of circumstances beyond my control. When my kids lose something, it's because they're irresponsible, but when I lose something, it was because I had a lot on my mind.

This does not mean that we are never to say no to the demands others place on us, things that might inconvenience us. In other words this does not mean that we let others walk all over us. But it does mean that we need to think about the other person and his needs and interests rather than just think about things from our own perspective.

**Remember:** It's the golden rule principle—how would I feel if I were him? How would I want to be treated? That's how I need to treat the other person. (Consider others, not just yourself.)

#### B. Plan with a little bit of flexibility in mind

In other words, relax and change once in a while even though you are inconvenienced in the process. What I am thinking is, take time to enjoy the scenery on the detours of inconvenience. We usually set our plans in concrete instead of Jello. But sadly, once set in concrete, and we are on the highway of our choosing. We are not about to change directions or destination for any reason because, well, it is just to inconvenient.

**Don't forget:** when it comes to flexibility remember: Write your goal in concrete and your plans in sand.

The philosopher Albert Camus said it like this: "Blessed are the hearts that can bend; they shall never be broken." As someone else said. Write your plans in pencil and give God the eraser. He

may have something else in mind for you. Remember every storm is different. The better prepared you are, the less of an inconvenience that storm it's going to be.

C. Don't forget the admonition of scripture

*Philippians 2:3,4 Don't be selfish; don't live to make a good impression on others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourself. Don't think only about your own affairs, but be interested in others, too, and what they are doing.*

This passage might be stated like this. *For us to esteem others higher than ourselves may simply mean that I will be inconvenienced so that others won't be.*

VI. A final note

Lets think about convenience and inconvenience like we think about cars. If we are content to put the car of our convenience in gear and start down the road but never shift gears, never shift because we are happy with the convenience of how it s running and when it will get us there, then also consider this,

If we can't or won't shift gears once in a while in the **Cadillac of our convenience**, let's not be grabbing the gear shift and steering wheel of the **other guys jalopy** and try telling him when to shift gears and where to go. Have you been driving **someone else's car for your own convenience?** That is not fair, **and** according to our verse in Philippians 2:3,4 it is not biblical either.

G. K. Chesterton said; An adventure is only an inconvenience rightly considered. An inconvenience is an adventure wrongly considered. So next time you feel you are being inconvenienced don't get upset, just look at it as a new adventure about to take place.

In closing remember that Jesus was inconvenienced by having to come to earth and die so we could live. If you have not taken advantage of his inconvenience so you could go to heaven why not read, think about, believe, and do what the following few lines tell you. If you do not find it convenient to do this now, please be assured that you will be inconvenienced for an eternity with no way of escape

Realize you are a sinner Romans 3:23

Understand that the payday for sin is death or eternal conscious separation from God. Romans 6:23a

Know that there is a way of escape for you. Romans 6:23b and John 1:12

Desire to escape and pray this or a similar prayer.

"Dear God, I know I am a sinner. I am truly sorry for my sins, and I confess them all to You [name them]. Lord Jesus, forgive all my sins and come into my heart as my Saviour and Lord. I receive You right now. Help me from this time forward to live for You. Thank You for hearing and answering my prayer. In Jesus' name. Amen."

On the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ I became a Christian by inviting Jesus Christ into my life to forgive my sin.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

If you have further questions or have chosen to do this, be sure to let us know so we can help you, pray for you and encourage you in your new life.

You can reach us at [lapeerchurch@gmail.com](mailto:lapeerchurch@gmail.com) Subject line: (Salvation)