

To all the Saints at Manatee Life Church,

**SCRIPTURE:**

Romans 8:28 (CEB) – Larger reading: Romans 8:18-30

*“We know that God works all things together for good for the ones who love God, for those who are called according to his purpose.”*

**STORY:**

Studder-Kennedy, chaplain to George V, said that when he stood before God, one question would be asked by the Almighty: “Well, what did you make of it?”

**OBSERVATION:**

Life interrupted ... that’s us in 2020! A our great thought through plans, carefully laid out, with all of its hopes and good wishes kind

The year was 2010 and there I was laid up in hospital room 435 experiencing some discomfort in my chest. Nothing really to worry about, but the doctors were. The doctors were taking every precaution considering my previous double by-pass surgery. Four the past two days they ran one test after another. All of them came back positive or negative as the case may be and yet there was this pain. If this process had a name it would be called, “Stump the doctors.” They still do not know what was causing the discomfort, but I was released with specific instructions not to do anything strenuous until further tests are run. I was experiencing one of life’s “Speed Bumps” ... slow down, get plenty of rest, and try not to over do anything. Boy was that hard! And by the way, the doctors never did discover what was causing the pain. Life just went on. Just a little speed bump! My life got interrupted!

It did cause me to begin to think about the various “signs” that are placed along our path in this journey called life. Each sign has a distinct purpose to slow us down, take another course of action, watch out for what is coming our way ... maybe they are signs from God?

I was thinking of a general contractor, a salesman, a financial advisor, an engineer and a teacher – four males, one female. Each of them hit a detour sign as they were living their life. All of them married, some had families, and two were in the planning stages of trying to determine the best time to start a family. They all had successful jobs, which they enjoyed that provided them nice incomes that created a comfortable lifestyle. They were just moving through life when life throws ups a “Detour Sign”. That detour sign was unexpected and in a couple of situations was something they had been “fighting” for a significant period of time. The detour took them all to seminary and they are now serving churches in the state of Florida as pastors. Their lives got interrupted!

Some individuals come upon “Warning – Danger Ahead” signs. Some were taken by total surprise while some had warning signs all along the path of life which they

decided to ignore. In each case it meant an adjustment – an adjustment that could be demanding, stressful, and life shaping ... it would mean that from this point on their life was going to be different ... not worse, not better ... just different. The news from their doctors wasn't good, the pink-slip arrived, divorce papers were served, a major decision by their spouse was made, a letter was delivered ... something happened ... something significant was taking place that spelled out "Warning – Danger Ahead" and life simply took on a whole new, unexpected direction. Sometimes it actually created a better situation though it took a long time to arrive at the "better" designation while at other times the "Danger Ahead" was disastrous, life changing, and pain-filled ... there simply wasn't a good way or angle to look at the situation no matter how hard you looked. And life got interrupted ... BIG TIME!

In all of these situations life simply got interrupted ... our life ... our planned and peaceful life ... our plans, our hopes, our desires, our wishes, our future ... all got changed. We didn't ask for the change. We didn't seek the change. We did not want the change necessarily. We weren't planning to experience the change. But, the change came nevertheless. How we face these changes is a testimony to our relationship with God. And so, in the confidence of that relationship, our faith in God through Jesus Christ and in the face of those little interruptions along our life's journey ... our faith journey ... we can state: *"That's why we can be so sure that every detail in our lives of love for God is worked into something good."* Romans 8:28 (MSG)

Therefore, our choice is to "enjoy" the interruptions (and with Covid-19 there have been more than one little interruption), tolerate them, deal with them creatively or fight them ... or learn from them, praise the Lord in the process and move on.

**QUOTE:**

*"Start writing a new chapter, for if you live by the book you'll never make history."*  
- Ben Sobel

**PRAYER:**

We had our life all planned out, Lord, and then this interruption happens. We hadn't been prepared for it. We didn't see it coming. Bang! It stopped us in our tracks. And, Lord, we turned to you in an attempt to make sense of it all. Take away our anger, our confusion, our sense of being lost in the middle of life. Help us to rediscover your Kingdom in all of this mess we call life. Amen.

And the faith journey continues, Pastor Jim  
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***There is a lesson for us to learn from the Hebrew children as they faced crossing the ragging Jordan river – Follow God; Consecrate ourselves; and Step into the water! "See" you on Sunday via Facebook ... and then in-person October 25<sup>th</sup>***