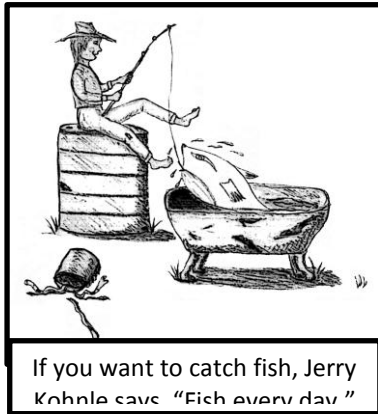


# Something to Pray About

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By Cindy Sears – July 2008



## **BIG FISH STORY**

Have you ever wondered why God leaves us here on earth after we are saved when continuing to live in this fallen world can lead to pain—physical and emotional—and we continue to be tempted by sin? And why do we not stand at the judgment seat of Christ, where our works will be judged and we receive our rewards, until the end of time, instead of immediately after we die? (“For the Son of Man is going to come with His angels in the glory of His Father, and then He will reward each according to what he has done.” --Matthew 16:27, NIV)

If you think that you are left here to make a comfortable living and to be happy, you are probably going to be disappointed somewhere down the road. Jesus said, “No servant is greater than his master. If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also.” (John 15:20, NIV). And Paul said in 2 Timothy 3:12, “In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted...” We are even told that we are blessed when we are persecuted or suffer affliction (see Matthew 5:11-12). James tells us to “consider it pure joy... whenever [we] face trials of many kinds... (James 1:2, NIV). So why are we left here?

One reason is so that we can grow and mature in our faith and walk with the Lord. “Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.” (James 1:4). Paul proclaims “it is God’s will that you should be sanctified...” (1 Thessalonians 4:3, NIV). Most believers find it easier “to work out [their] salvation with fear and trembling” (Philippians 2:12, NIV), though, than to do the other task that our Lord expects us to do while here. And what is that task?

Our Lord is “not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” (2 Peter 3:9b, KJV). In Matthew 4:19 (& Mark 1:17), Jesus called men to be his disciples and told them, “I will make you fish for people”. At the end of His presence in bodily form on this earth, He told His disciples to “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.” (Matthew 28:19-20, NIV).

So, how many ‘fish’ have you caught for the Lord? Have you baited any hooks? Have you picked up the fishing pole or gotten in the boat? Remember, we don’t fish alone or in our own power, but with and in the power of the Holy Spirit. Let Him have you to do God’s work for the short time that you are blessed with life on this earth.

And why do we wait to the end of the age to receive our rewards? Because our witness survives us—in our works, our children, the works of others that we supported, and in the lives of those we helped lead to Christ or mature in the faith. How big a fish story will you have to tell Christ on judgment day?