

Tuesday, March 31, 2020

## What's in Your Cup?

by Scott Stoner

*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.*

—John 14:27

I have learned valuable lessons recently that I'd like to share with you, one from a story and one from an experience. First, the story.

You are holding a cup of coffee when someone comes along and accidentally bumps your arm, making you spill coffee everywhere. Why did you spill the coffee? Because someone bumped into you, right? Wrong answer. You spilled the coffee because *coffee* was in the cup. If tea had been in it, you would have spilled *tea*. Whatever is inside the cup is what will come out. Therefore, when life comes along and shakes you, whatever is inside of you will come out.

So each of us needs to ask ourselves, "What's in my cup?" When life gets bumpy, what spills over? Joy, gratefulness, peace, and humility? Or anger, bitterness, harsh words, and reactions? The lesson I learned was that we get to choose what's in our cup.

Another lesson learned came while I was driving. Another car cut me off in traffic without (seemingly) any awareness of my presence. I was not proud of the words that came out of my mouth, and was glad they were for my ears only in the confines of my car. This experience showed me that there is a bit too much stress and irritability in my cup right now. That day I chose to react rather than respond and wanted to blame the other driver for my reaction. But as the story points out, that's the wrong answer. The lesson learned is that I need to be more intentional about filling my cup with patience, forgiveness, and understanding.

**Making It Personal:** Can you think of a time when some kind of stress "bumped" you? Did grace spill out of your cup, or something else? What can you learn from your experience?