

### **It can and it does happen**

*I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that often I have planned to come to you (and have been prevented so far) so that I may obtain some fruit among you also, even as among the rest of the Gentiles.*  
(Rom. 1.13)

*For this reason I have often been prevented from coming to you.*  
(Rom. 15.22)

The apostle Paul was no stranger to trials and difficulties in his many travels as a missionary and church planter. In the beginning and end of his letter to the church in Rome, Paul stated he had planned to come to them but had been prevented. Paul used two different words for 'prevented' in the above two verses of Scripture, but both words have the same meaning: something had hindered Paul's planned trip to Rome. No doubt Paul was frustrated in his plans.

In Blog 21-2, posted in November of last year, I wrote on the subject of five words to help you in your Bible study time. The last word, frustration, is a reality we all face in our walk with Christ. There can be all types of distractions and hindrances that can hinder and frustrate our desire to study God's Word daily and to walk with Him daily. I have an example that happened just last week in my own life.

One day last week, the afternoon was a beautiful, cloudless day and I thought a great afternoon to go for a walk. The snow and ice we had received the week before was melting off and I thought I would drive to the YMCA and walk on their outdoor track; it was a good idea or so I thought. There were small patches of unmelted snow along the track to which I just stepped aside in the grass and kept on going. Then I came to a larger patch of unmelted snow and beyond that a patch of standing water on the track. I stepped aside in the grass to walk around like I had done with the other smaller patches—and sank up to my ankles in cold, watery mush! Awesome! There went my plan for a nice, sunny afternoon walk outside. I walked around the patch of snow, got in my car, drove home, and finished my exercise on my bike, totally frustrated.

Frustration can and does happen to all of us at some time in our lives, sometimes it seems at many times during the week, or even the day. Frustration throws you off your game, it interrupts your rhythm of whatever you wanted to do or had planned; it is just, well, frustrating!

Is there a cure for frustration or a way to prevent from getting frustrated in our attempts to walk with and live for the Lord? Unfortunately, there is not. The apostle Paul, however, did offer some encouraging words to us:

*Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. (Phil. 3.13-14)*

What do you do when you get frustrated by obstacles in studying God's Word or in living for the Lord? Frustration can and does happen. Knowing frustration will come prepares you for that day. Press on, reach forward, don't quit.