

## **GOD WORKS IN CONNECTIONS – SATAN WORKS IN GAPS**

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Dominic, at four years of age, was quite content playing at Mimi's house, one late-summer afternoon. His Mimi had put his favorite video game ("Bomber") on; actually she did so an hour earlier and he was so engrossed in winning that he had no time for his hotdog and juice. He could spend hours playing this game, if left to do so. While so involved in the game, he hardly noticed the rain that began to pound the roof of Papa and Mimi's home. The wind began to pick up and cause a howling sound through the trees; those trees that (if he were to notice) were bending at more than their usual angle. His Mimi however, noticed especially so when lightning flashed and thunder clapped, signifying a severe storm was close by. She mentioned to Dominic that "we need to shut off the game" but Dominic replied "just a few more minutes." That few more minutes did not happen as the next very loud thunder clap really shut things down for them. All went black. Dominic was scared and ran to the comforting arms of his Mimi. He knew something wasn't right. Mimi tried the light switches, nothing. She then thought to check the circuit breaker in the main breaker box in the garage; something her wise husband once told her might do the trick. With flashlight in hand and Dominic in tow, she checked the breakers. None were tripped but they were still without much light, except for the flashlight and some candles that Mimi began to light. Over the course of the next hour, Mimi learned from her neighbors that a transformer had blown to start, and then the high winds took out a transmission tower set of lines coming from the electrical generating plant. "Wow, some storm," she thought.

Quite often, life has a way to provide us lessons, if we are willing to learn from them but what message could be gleaned from the seemingly innocence of a storm (at first) to the present situation that Mimi and Dominic now faced? Is there a message during or after the storm to explain how our relationship to God can (should) be? Really? Let's see ...

Looking back at the storm we see that the transformer blew first. Transformer replacement is a pretty routine and a simple fix for a repairman. Restoration could be accomplished within hours. Spiritually, this ("transformer blow") could be likened to blowing your cool at work. Not good, but hopefully not too damaging. However, a transmission tower and set of lines was no trivial matter and it could take quite some time, and resources to fix. Spiritually, this ("line down") problem can be likened to sin in our lives where restoration is likely not so easy and could take a lot of resources to resolve.

Spiritual darkness typically does not happen "overnight." Satan will look for weaknesses – or chinks in our armor – where he can gain a foothold, and over time set up situations and circumstances to cause a gap to grow wider and wider between us and God. Pastor George Sawyer of Calvary Assembly of God (Decatur, AL) often says, "God works in connections and satan works in the gaps." That's for sure, as I've found this to be the case in my own life.

Scripture says that "the thief cometh only to steal, kill and destroy ..." (Jn 10:10). Translated to mean, satan would like nothing better to disconnect Christians from our power source ("God")

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by stealing, killing or destroying the link (The Way, “Jesus”) in our lives. He can do just that if we do not stay connected to The Vine (i.e., The Way, The Link). Jesus said, “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing” (Jn 15:5).

I’ve learned, via the workings of the Holy Spirit in our lives (i.e., the connected power flowing through us), that we are most effective in our service and ministry as Christians.

If you are away from God (that gap I spoke of), then the first order of business to power restoration is to ask for forgiveness from our ever gracious and merciful God, through His redemptive Son, Jesus Christ. Next, we need to know how to prevent it from happening again, and act on what we learn. The highly skilled engineers may not be able to prevent a storm from causing such an electrical power outage, but I do know that the Holy Spirit (if we listen and heed His voice) is ever present to counsel and guide us on the straight and narrow, if we remain connected to The Power Source.

I encourage you to stay connected to our power source (God), by staying connected to His Son, and through the fellowship of like-minded believers, like your Christian brothers and sisters.

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