

Sermon Notes

Practical Lessons for Understanding the Word of God



有勇氣面對反對力量 (挪亞的故事及例證) The Courage to Face Opposition

02/12/17

KEY PASSAGE: Genesis 6:5-22 | SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE: Genesis 7:1

創六:5-22

創七:1

April 05, 2015

SUMMARY

Courage is an essential quality in every believer's life. * *godly characteristic*

We need bravery to face difficult situations, admit mistakes, tell the truth, share our faith, and simply obey the Lord. "Courage" can be defined as following difficult instruction in the face of danger and doing what's right without turning back. Noah is a wonderful example of a courageous man who did exactly what the Lord told him despite all the difficulties that accompanied God's assignment.

SERMON POINTS

Although the story of Noah isn't generally associated with bravery, by examining the setting and the obstacles, we'll understand why he exhibited courage in his obedience to the Lord.

* *to do what is right (in the sight of God)*

God's description of the earth. When the Lord looked at the earth in Noah's day, it was nothing like His original creation. In their fallen condition, mankind had turned away from the Lord and become corrupt and evil. We see this in:

■ **The extensiveness of man's sin.** God saw the vast extent of human wickedness. This wasn't just an isolated area of evil, for the entire earth was ruined in His sight because "all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth" (Gen. 6:12).

■ **The intensity of man's sin.** The wickedness was not only widespread; it was extreme. The earth was filled with violence, and mankind was consumed by sin and immorality. "Every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (v. 5). In giving themselves over to sinful desires, the human race

had descended into depravity.

The Lord's feelings about the state of mankind.

Although the Lord had created a beautiful earth and provided everything mankind needed, now human society was completely contaminated by evil. They had walked away from God and had become increasingly wicked and violent. Their rejection and sinfulness broke His heart, and He was grieved and sorry that He had made them (v. 6).

God's intentions. Because the entire earth was corrupt, the Lord decided to send a worldwide flood. Although some people may think that a loving God would never wipe out every living thing on earth, we must remember that the Lord is also holy, righteous, and just. Yet even in the midst of His judgment, He extended grace to Noah and his family by providing a plan for their salvation. They alone, along with two of every kind of animal, would safely ride out the flood in an ark.

Noah's need for courage. Although this passage in Genesis doesn't explicitly mention the bravery of Noah, we can picture the obstacles and challenges he faced in obeying the Lord's instructions. Imagine his confusion when he was told to build an ark. He'd never seen such a thing. When the Lord gave him the instructions, he must have noticed the absence of sails, a rudder, an engine, and a compass. There was no way to navigate this great ship. That's because God was the pilot of the ark. Noah's job was simply to trust Him, obey His instructions, and leave the outcome to the Lord.

As Noah invested his time, money, and effort in building the ark, he undoubtedly suffered ridicule. After all, an ark as long as one and a half football fields would have been hard to miss. Before long, the people probably started mocking his foolish

Sensuality: lust of flesh eyes flesh

to our current time

神要我們憂傷心碎悔改吧!

帖後三:5 "direct"

** Trust & obey leave the outcome to God! * God directs!*

勇敢是基督徒並有品格, 說實話, 做見證, 順服上帝, 跟隨主有回頭

勇氣, 勇敢, 壯胆

挪亞的例證

勇敢地順從神

人的罪

deprived wicked 人犯罪

** 面對困難處境, 承認處境, 傳講真理, 分享信仰, 福音, 順服上帝, 不說謊, 不做害羞的事! 榮神益人!*

construction project. It took courage to continue building despite the derision.

Noah was doing more than just building an ark; he was faithfully proclaiming the one true God to people who would not listen.

Everyone who has ever shared their faith in Christ knows it takes courage, especially when the listeners are antagonistic or scornful. When we look at Noah's basis for courage, we see how his brave determination wasn't due to self-confidence. His courage was based upon:

■ His absolute certainty that he had heard from God. Noah knew that the Lord had spoken to him. And his situation is not unique; God is still speaking to His people today. The question is: are we hearing Him? He wants to give us guidance and instruction, but we must attentively seek Him in prayer.

■ The assurance of the Lord's presence with him. Because Noah "walked with God," he was encouraged by His presence (Gen. 6:9). Similarly, when we are convinced that the Lord is with us, we'll have the courage to tackle whatever He calls us to do.

■ The clarity of God's instructions to him. The Lord gave Noah specific directions about how to build the ark. Today, the indwelling Holy Spirit gives us clear instructions about how to walk with Him in obedience. He convicts us when we're going the wrong way, calls us into specific areas of service, prompts us to obey, and reminds us to trust Him to keep His promises.

■ The experience of the Lord's strength in him. Since building an ark is a huge job, we can be sure that there were times when Noah struggled with exhaustion and wondered how he could ever finish it. But when God assigns a task, He also provides the strength to accomplish it. Because He is always faithful to empower us, inadequacy is never an excuse for avoiding His call.

■ The warning of God's impending judgment. The threat of a flood was a huge incentive for Noah to keep building the ark and warning the people of the

coming judgment. An integral part of walking with the Lord is heeding His warnings in Scripture and choosing the path of obedience, which always leads to blessing.

■ The favor of God. The entire earth was filled with wickedness, but "Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD" (v. 8). He knew that whatever he did in obedience to God would be successful. As believers, we are also covered by the Lord's favor—even if we don't recognize it. But when we walk obediently with Him, we'll sense His grace surrounding us.

■ Noah's intimate relationship with the Lord. Even in the face of opposition, Noah never gave up because He knew the Lord intimately and wanted to obey Him. And that kind of relationship is still available to every believer. God wants us to know Him in a way that exceeds any human relationship.

■ God's promise for his future. The prospects for the earth looked bleak, but Noah's destiny was safely in the Lord's hands. Today, our eternal future is secured at the moment of salvation when our names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

RESPONSE

■ Oftentimes, it takes courage to obey God. Have you ever thought that something God asked of you was impossible, perhaps a task you thought was beyond your abilities? How did you overcome the feeling of helplessness?

■ Perhaps you struggle to surrender to Him. What benefits will you gain from complete surrender? What personal and biblical resources can you use to get to a place of trust and surrender?

■ When you trust in the Lord, He will be as faithful in your circumstances as He was in Noah's. Take a moment to reflect on the times in your life when God's faithfulness to you was apparent. Write them down.

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信裏地停講獨一

真神

勇敢

果決

堅心

確定

神的引導

及指點

與神同行

神清

楚指示

神賜力量

上帝眼前蒙恩

恩典

智慧

力量

同在

親密關係

更深認識

在神永恆王國

名字在生命冊上

有勇氣去

順服

信靠

降服

事奉

等候

跟隨

上帝

I hear
know
think
trust
obey
do

Lord, I want to (need to) hear from you.

信心+勇氣+順服+行動+恆心

Sermon Notes

Practical Lessons for Understanding the Word of God



(約書亞的故事及例証), 心灵的好品質與決心 * 順服的勇氣 *

The Courage to Obey

書一:1-9

申三:8; 一五:10-12

申三:7, 10-12

書一:10-11

04/19/2015

KEY PASSAGE: Joshua 1:1-9 | SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE: Deuteronomy 34:7, 10-12 | Joshua 1:10-11; 23:1-3, 6-8; 24:29-31 | Judges 21:25 | Psalm 32:8; 119:105 | Proverbs 3:5-6 | Romans 8:28 | 1 John 5:14

SUMMARY

Obeying God is always the right thing to do, but it isn't always the easiest. wisest

When His assignments seem beyond our capabilities, we need brave determination to follow through.

Courage is the quality of mind and spirit enabling us to meet danger, opposition, or the challenges of life with fearlessness, calmness, and decisiveness.

Joshua was a man who understood the challenges of obedience because the Lord entrusted him with the responsibility of leading the Israelites into the land He'd promised to give them. Although Joshua lived thousands of years ago, the Lord's message to him is still applicable to us today.

SERMON POINTS

Courage is needed to fulfill God's assignments for our lives.

Why would Joshua need bravery to achieve the job God designed for him? He needed it because:

- **He was stepping into Moses' shoes.** After performing many miraculous signs in Pharaoh's presence, Moses led the children of Israel out of Egypt and through the wilderness for forty long years. There had never been a prophet like Moses "whom the Lord knew face to face" (Deut. 34:10). Anyone who's ever had to follow a great leader knows how intimidating that can be. But Moses was now dead, and Joshua was called to take the reins of leadership.
- **Conquering the Promised Land was a seemingly impossible task.** Its walled cities were like fortresses, and the soldiers were skilled in

* 看似不可能達成的任務!

warfare and equipped with weapons and chariots. Furthermore, there were giants in the land. Because of all these challenges, the Lord told Joshua three times to be strong and courageous (Josh. 1:6-7, 9).

Although all of us face different situations than the one Joshua encountered, we each have areas of obedience that require courage. Perhaps it's confronting a friend who is living in sin, or responding to a boss who wants us to compromise our moral values. Or maybe God is calling us to stand up for our beliefs in a classroom or refuse to give in to peer pressure. Whatever the issue, we also need courage to do what's right.

Courage is strengthened by God's promises to us.

The Bible is filled with assurances that give us the boldness to move ahead in obedience. Although many of these assurances were written to people who lived long ago, the scriptural principles within them still apply to us today. To encourage and assure Joshua, the Lord gave him the following promises:

- **The land.** "Every place on which the sole of your foot treads, I have given it to you, just as I spoke to Moses" (Josh. 1:3). When God makes a promise, He sees it as already completed.
- **His powerful presence.** "No man will be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you" (Josh. 1:5).
- **Success.** The Lord promised Joshua success in his mission if he would "be careful to do according to all the law" and "meditate on it day and night" (Josh. 1:7, 8). That was the only way Joshua would be able to guide the people wisely and protect them

Obeying God
↓
goal

SERMON NOTES | SN130106

from the pagan influences that would surround them. Like Joshua, we need to read the Scriptures to receive God's instructions in order to succeed.

What does it mean when we meditate on God's Word?

Meditation is a process by which we apply Scripture to our lives. It begins with reading God's Word and asking Him questions such as: *What are You saying to me in this passage? Is there something You want me to do? Is there an area of my life You want to change?* Meditation on the Scriptures reveals any hidden areas we've reserved for ourselves, prompting us to fully surrender to the Lord.

Since God speaks to us personally through His Word, that's one way we'll find out what He wants us to do and how we are to live. When we go to His Word, the Holy Spirit interprets it for us in a way that speaks to our individual needs and circumstances.

The key to courage is meditation upon God's Word.

When we reflect on Scripture as part of our daily lives, we can expect the following results:

- **It quietens the spirit.** Instead of fretting and becoming discouraged, we can rely on the best counselor in the world—Almighty God. His words bring comfort and peace to our souls. *心灵平静*
- **It purifies the heart.** The Word of God is a lamp to our feet, revealing things that shouldn't be in our lives. It shows us the right way to go (Ps. 119:105). *净化心灵*
- **It sharpens perception.** Meditation opens our minds to understand truths we'd never comprehend otherwise. When we search the Scriptures, the Lord increases our knowledge and leads us to His promises. In time, we can build a promise bank of verses that strengthen our faith and fill us with the courage to obey. *磨利思想*
- **It clarifies direction.** Whenever the path is unclear, and we need specific direction for decisions, the Lord uses our time of meditation to speak to our hearts, guiding us to the choices He would have us make. *分辨方向*

■ **It confirms or cautions counsel.** The wisdom found in God's Word helps us evaluate the advice of others to determine if it's godly and wise or if it should be rejected. *Be careful looking for counsel.*

■ **It increases faith.** When the Lord blesses us for our obedience and does what He's promised, our confidence in Him and His Word increases. *增加信心*

■ **It enlarges our view of God.** Meditation opens our eyes to who the Lord is. He's not just a God who resides in heaven, but also one who lives within us through the presence of the Holy Spirit. *书三:1-8
= 10:29-31
vs.
士二:25.*

■ **It keeps us aware of His presence and power.** When we listen to the Lord in His Word, we'll discern that He is continually with us and is constantly displaying His power through us as He works in our lives. *增强我们认识神
並经历祂的同在
及能力!*

■ **God guides us to success.** God doesn't want us to fail. His goal is to teach us valuable lessons that will ensure that we eventually succeed. He'll take each experience and work it out for our good if we'll obey Him (Rom. 8:28). *神引領我們
得勝成功。*

RESPONSE

- What types of situations are you dealing with that require courage to obey God?
- Have you meditated on God's Word today? How is He speaking to you through the Scripture you've studied?
- How can you encourage others to courageously obey God despite the difficult circumstances in their lives?

*a zeal and a courage in his soul that
all the forces of the world can't destroy!*

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Sermon Notes

Practical Lessons for Understanding the Word of God



* Life Principle Note

A Call for Courage

基甸的故事及例子

士六:7 (entire chapter 6; 六章)

KEY PASSAGE: Judges 6-7 | SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE: Joshua 1:6-7, 9 | Proverbs 16:18 | Hebrews 13:5

書一:6-7

箴十六:18

來十三:5

04/12/2015.

SUMMARY

The Lord has a plan for our lives.

* many plans

He knows all the details of every situation, and is committed to using each circumstance to glorify Himself and achieve His goals. His plan for us includes an overall purpose as well as many smaller opportunities that guide us into His good and perfect will. Although He knows exactly where He's leading us, the path isn't always clear from our perspective. We might easily become discouraged if we don't know what the Lord is doing in our lives. We need courage to carry on.

He is omniscient, omnipotent & omnipresent.

SERMON POINTS

* God is always willing to encourage us whenever we're afraid, uncertain, or overwhelmed by opposition.

神必與我們同在，同行於人生的高山低谷。

Gideon was an Israelite who faced all these challenges, yet the Lord faithfully helped him every step of the way. God is willing to step out far beyond what we think or expect to encourage us in whatever we are facing in life.

God calls those who He's equipped for the task He has in mind.

Even before the Lord reveals what He wants us to do, He's already prepared us for it. This doesn't necessarily mean we're completely qualified at the moment, but whatever we require to fulfill His purpose, He will supply.

This principle is clearly displayed in Gideon's life. Because of Israel's disobedience, the Lord had allowed them to be harassed by the Midianites, who repeatedly

overran their territory, destroying all the crops. Gideon was hiding in a wine press, beating out wheat, hoping to save the wheat from the Midianites, when the angel of the Lord appeared to him, saying, "The LORD is with you, O valiant warrior" (Judg. 6:12). Since Gideon didn't consider himself brave, this greeting made no sense. Furthermore, when the Lord told him to deliver Israel from their enemies, he didn't feel qualified.

Valiant warrior

大能的勇士呀，

上帝与你同在。

The Lord understands that we need courage.

神知道我们要勇敢

Although Gideon was promised victory, he wanted proof that God was speaking to him. The angel of the Lord told him to place an offering of bread and meat on a rock and pour broth over it. When the angel caused fire to spring up and consume the sacrifice, Gideon knew with certainty that he had heard from the Lord. We should never refrain from asking God for clarification when we're uncertain if we're hearing His voice, rather than others' opinions or our own ideas. Once we're sure, we'll have the confidence to step out and do exactly what the Lord has told us.

The Lord uses lesser challenges to prepare us for greater ones.

神会用较小的

挑战来预备我

们面对更大的

士六:25-32

Before giving Gideon the biggest assignment of his life, God gave him the smaller tasks of tearing down his father's idols and building an altar to the Lord. Although this was a dangerous act, which would anger the men of the city, Gideon passed the test and obeyed the Lord.

Faithful obedience in every situation is crucial because God may be testing and preparing us for bigger opportunities. We only have two choices:

存信心的順服

是必須的

(1) obey the Lord and find out what He's willing to do with the rest of our lives, or (2) disobey Him and spend a lifetime wondering what He could have done

至小事上順服神並忠心做工.

if we'd only obeyed. Little decisions may often seem insignificant, but to God they are a big deal. If we're not willing to obey Him in small matters, why would He trust us with greater assignments?

Even those who are courageous desire added assurance of God's presence.

The Lord knows our weaknesses and is faithful to provide whatever is necessary for our successful obedience. Before Gideon delivered Israel from the Midianites, he requested a sign from God. First he asked that a wool fleece placed on the threshing floor overnight would be wet with dew in the morning while the surrounding ground remained dry. Then he requested that the fleece remain dry and the ground be covered in dew. In order to reassure him, God did what he asked both times.

assurance

The Lord understands our doubts, but we have something Gideon didn't have—the Bible. We don't have to throw out fleeces to make sure we are hearing from Him because we can trust His Word. Furthermore, if we've walked with Christ for any length of time, His strengthening presence gives us confidence to obey.

God's top priority is His glory.

榮耀歸神

Since the Lord wants to protect us from pride, He'll sometimes give assignments that we could never accomplish on our own. Although Gideon's army was vastly outnumbered, God told him they were too numerous. To ensure that only He would get credit for the victory, the Lord instructed Gideon to release all the men who were afraid.

Even then God said, "The people are still too many" (Judg. 7:4). He further decreased the numbers by testing how they drank water. Those who knelt to drink were dismissed, while those who put their hands to their mouths were told to remain. With only 300 men left, there was no way Israel could claim the victory. To further ensure that He would get the glory, God gave Gideon a battle strategy involving torches, pitchers, and trumpets. When the Israelite army surrounded the enemy camp at night and suddenly blew their trumpets and smashed the pitchers

x proudful, arrogant → destruction
humble, obeying and glorify God

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SERMON NOTES | SN121111

God put fears in enemy's hearts.

covering the torches, the Midianites panicked and killed each other in their confusion.

Noises pound, light

We have to walk humbly before Almighty God, trusting Him every day for whatever He wants to do in our lives.

For David, it was stones

Through the story of Gideon, the Lord teaches us five lessons about trusting in Him:

- **Don't underestimate what God can do in and through you.** He can use anyone and anything to accomplish His purposes.
- **God will always be with you in whatever He's called you to do.** You may feel helpless and inadequate, but you're never alone. We're assured in Scripture that the Lord will never leave or forsake us (Heb. 13:5).
- **The Lord is ready to give assurance when you doubt Him.** He'll work in your situation in a way that reinforces your trust in Him.
- **His ways are often surprising and challenging, but they're always the best and the most successful.** The Lord may ask you to do something that seems totally unreasonable, but success is guaranteed because God is the one who gave the assignment.
- **The Lord always works in a way that exalts and glorifies Him.** If you are willing to die to yourself and surrender to God, He will powerfully display Himself by accomplishing more in your life than you ever expected.

書-9

RESPONSE

- Can you think of a challenging situation in your life that took a great amount of courage?
- How can God use your obedience to bring honor to Him this week?
- What type of assignment is God asking of you today?

上帝願意, 你呢?

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- Who is running your life?
- Your relationship with God?

- Keep listening and watching.
- You are the Lord God.

信靠, 信服上帝.
接受上帝的呼召

神必同在
同工

賜智慧力量
完成祂的工作

His way is best & perfect!

一切成就必
高舉, 榮耀上帝!

*不可驕傲
胆怯
失去志氣
心懷二意
退縮
放棄
低估上帝
輕看自己

Sermon Notes

Practical Lessons for Understanding the Word of God



勇敢地堅定活出
你的信仰及見證

The Courage to Stand by Your Convictions

(效法但以理)

KEY PASSAGE: Daniel 6:10-26

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE: Daniel 2:48-49; 3:16-18; 4:19, 22-29; 5:29-31; 6:28

2 Corinthians 6:17

但六:10-26

但二:48-49; 三:16-18; 四:19, 22-29; 五:29-31; 六:28

林後六:17

02/12/17

SUMMARY

A conviction is a belief that is considered true and worthy of maintaining regardless of the consequences.

信仰的認証並持守實行

However, today we live in a generation that is being persuaded that there are no absolute moral truths. Instead of relying upon the truths in the Bible, each person is left to decide what is right in his own eyes. Because there are no standards, our society has become ungodly, immoral, unsafe, and worthy of God's judgment. We need to turn from this dangerous situation and stand firmly, without compromise, for our biblical beliefs.

完全地
真實的
真理及
道德
準則

聖潔是三一真神所默示

SERMON POINTS

Daniel is a perfect example of a man who lived according to his strong scriptural convictions. He was willing to stand for them even when doing so could have cost him his life.

Courage is needed to fulfill God's assignments for our lives.

我們需要勇氣去完成上帝的託付

When King Nebuchadnezzar conquered the nation of Israel, he took several young people to Babylon to train and indoctrinate into the Babylonian culture. Daniel, a teen at that time, remained in Babylon throughout the reigns of Nebuchadnezzar, his son Belshazzar, Darius the Mede, and Cyrus the Persian. Although Daniel was a foreigner, he influenced all four kings and became a person of great authority. Because he never backed down from his convictions, the phrase, "the God of Daniel" echoed in the chambers of those pagan kingdoms.

Daniel's example

先知但以理的例証

To resist the temptations to compromise our standards, we need to follow Daniel's godly example to see how:

■ He stood up for his convictions when he was a teenager. Early in life, Daniel made up his mind to live as a Hebrew and keep the Law of Moses. His first test came when he was given food and wine from the king's table. Since this food had been offered to idols, he requested a diet of vegetables and water. After 10 days, the king's official found that Daniel and his friends looked healthier than the other youths.

從年輕時就
堅持信仰

■ He was convinced that he should be a godly example to others. Daniel's determination to live in obedience to the Lord set an example for the other Jewish youths who were living in that heathen society.

下定決心要成為
敬虔忠主的
榜樣

■ He knew God would hear and answer his prayers. Daniel had the boldness to hold firm to his convictions and risk requesting a different diet. Since the Lord is committed to answering the prayers of His children who walk in obedience, we can also have this same conviction.

他知道上帝垂聽
並回答他的禱告

■ He was committed to being true to the Word of God. When Nebuchadnezzar had an alarming dream (Dan. 4:19-29), the Lord gave Daniel the horrifying interpretation. At that moment, Daniel had to decide whether he would tell the king the truth or conceal it. Despite the danger, Daniel held to his persuasions and delivered the Lord's message to the king. He had the courage to stand for what was right even though the king could have eliminated him.

對神話語真誠
但四:19-29

即使有生命危險
但以理依然
說當說的話!

■ **He had a conviction that he was not going to bow down to any other god.** At one point Daniel's three friends who shared his beliefs were put to the test. When Nebuchadnezzar made an image of himself and commanded all the people to bow down to it, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused, even though they faced being thrown into a burning furnace. They believed the Lord could deliver them. They were willing to die rather than bow down to any other god.

他不向假神下拜

■ **He was fully persuaded that God would protect him, no matter what.** Daniel could not be bought off or frightened into compromise because he had nothing to fear as long as his convictions were founded on God's Word.

他堅決相信神必定保護他

Daniel's motivation

如何站立的穩

Daniel was compelled to stand firm because:

■ **He was taught by his parents.** Having grown up in Jerusalem, Daniel learned to obey the Mosaic Law.

父母教導

■ **He studied the Word of God.** Since he knew the Scripture, he could confidently stand on the truth when challenged or questioned.

勤讀聖經

■ **He loved the Lord.** Daniel's devotion to God and His Word empowered his commitment.

愛上帝

■ **He was committed to obeying God.** He didn't just know the Word and love the Lord; he proved it with his obedience.

下決心跟從主

但理有勇敢之結果

The consequences of Daniel's courageous stand

As we look back at Daniel's life, we can see the results of his faithfulness in the following ways:

■ **He remained obedient to the Lord.** Daniel won his first battle when he refused to defile himself with the king's food. But that was just the beginning of his lifelong obedience to God.

但理一直順從神

■ **He influenced his companions to do the same.**

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego followed Daniel's example of obedience in refusing to eat the king's food. They were all blessed by God for their faithfulness to Him.

他影響他的朋友

■ **His obedience opened doors of opportunity**

他的順服開啟了他的機會成爲王的謀士並影響王。

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to counsel and influence kings. If Daniel had chosen to blend into the culture, the kings probably wouldn't have noticed him. But because he was a person of character who stood up for his convictions, the kings heard about the one true God. As believers, we make an impact in others' lives by bolding living for Christ without compromising our values.

為神而活

■ **God gave him favor with the kings.** Although Daniel was a foreigner who held firmly to his Hebrew beliefs, he was promoted to the highest places of authority by every king he served. Instead of persecuting him for speaking the truth, they raised him up.

神使他在王面前蒙恩

■ **God endowed him with one of the most important prophecies in His Word.** Because Daniel had remained a trustworthy and obedient servant in the midst of the Babylonian culture, the Lord entrusted him with amazing prophecies about future events.

神賜他在聖經中記錄下一些重要預言

Your convictions

我的認信及見證

God is looking for people like Daniel—followers of Christ who will stand by their godly convictions, even in the face of threat or temptation to compromise for profit. Use your God-given convictions to guide your actions.

神喜悅並找尋像但理的門徒：

你願意嗎？
你忠心順服嗎？

RESPONSE

- In your opinion, what standards in society have become ungodly, immoral, or unsafe?
- Why should you take a stand against the corruption you see when others don't seem to care at all?
- How can God use you as a person of character in your areas of influence - whether at work, church, or at home?

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Sermon Notes

Practical Lessons for Understanding the Word of God



有勇敢
繼續前行

The Courage to Keep Going

(效法使徒保羅)

提後四:1-8

詩三:8; 箴三:5-6; 約十:7, 13

3-29-15

KEY PASSAGE: 2 Timothy 4:1-8 | SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE: Psalm 32:8 | Proverbs 3:5-6 | John 16:7, 13
Acts 13:47; 23:11 | Romans 8:28 | 2 Corinthians 11:22-28 | Galatians 6:14 | Ephesians 3:16; 6:10, 14-17
Philippians 1:12, 21; 4:4, 13 | Hebrews 13:5

Does this fit who I am?

SUMMARY

We're often tempted to give up or walk away when situations become difficult or painful.

But believers are called to follow Christ's example of endurance through hardship. Giving up just doesn't fit who we are in Christ. Despite mistreatment, rejection, conflict, discouragement, loneliness, or seemingly insurmountable problems, the Lord wants us to choose to persevere until He redirects us.

The apostle Paul is a wonderful example of a man who refused to give up. Even at the end of his life, he was still doing what God wanted him to do. While in a Roman prison, he wrote a letter to a young pastor named Timothy, challenging him to follow his example and keep preaching the Word even when the people would eventually refuse to listen (2 Tim. 4:1-8).

SERMON POINTS

The apostle Paul had the courage to keep going despite all the trouble he faced.

Paul demonstrated such courage to persevere because he had:

- **An awareness that God was with him:** In 2 Corinthians 11:22-28, Paul described some of the persecutions, hardships, and pressures he endured—imprisonments, beatings, shipwreck, various dangers, sleepless nights, hunger, thirst, and exposure to the elements—yet through them all he knew the Lord was with him. It's easy to believe God is with us when everything's fine, but when times are tough, we must cling to this truth so we won't

Almighty God is with me!

become discouraged and give up. Too often people quit right before the Lord opens an opportunity, gives a victory, or changes a situation.

■ The experience of the Lord's strength within him:

Because Paul depended on the power of almighty God, he could say, "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me" (Phil. 4:13). Today that same divine energy is within every believer through the presence of the Holy Spirit. This means we each have within us the strength to do the will of God. We may not feel it, but it's there.

However, having God's power doesn't exempt us from trouble. The only way we'll have the courage to be strong and carry on is to be in the Word of God. If we'll pray to be strengthened with His power (Eph. 3:16), put on the full armor of God (Eph. 6:11), and believe that God causes all things to work together for our good (Rom. 8:28), we can face whatever is ahead.

- **The assurance of being in God's will:** Knowing that he was accomplishing what the Lord had called him to do gave Paul the determination to keep going despite hardship and persecution. God had sent him to preach the gospel and reach the Gentiles with the message of salvation in Christ, and he was determined to fight the good fight, finish the course, and keep the faith (2 Tim. 4:7). If we're going to persist through hard times of doing God's will, we must trust that He will guide us each step of the way (Ps. 32:8).

- **The overflowing joy of Christ:** Even a Roman jail could not steal Paul's joy. Since he was fulfilling God's purposes, he could rejoice. In fact, he described how his circumstances had "turned out

上帝保守及帶領我的每一步。

別太早放棄！
神會帶領指示。

神能加力量
凡事都能做！
腓四:13

神的
智慧
能力
剛強
全副軍裝
愛與恩惠
同行同工
保證與保障
為我們爭戰
力量我的力量
喜樂我的喜樂
肯定與讚美
藉着我結果子
五福必成就

Rejoice in the Lord no matter what (whatever)! The best is reserved for you!!
Follow God's will and purposes, never give up and walk away!

for the greater progress of the gospel" because the entire praetorian guard had heard about Christ (Phil. 1:12). 腓-:12

We're all quick to rejoice and praise Jesus when our lives are comfortable and pleasant. But when times get hard, many of us are more likely to complain to the Lord than to rejoice in Him. We forget that He's promised to walk with us and work it all out for our good if we'll respond with praise and trust. 珍惜上帝所给"改变生命"的功课

■ An appreciation of the Lord's life-changing

lessons: The apostle Paul was an awesome student of God's Word. What he learned not only fills much of our New Testament, but it also filled his heart. That's why he could respond to trials with joy and keep going. Each situation was a chance to learn valuable spiritual lessons and grow in maturity.

When we don't understand the Lord's purposes and trust that He's working for our good, we won't see the value of going through hard times. The real question is: are things going God's way, but we're simply out of His will? He may be using that tough situation to draw us to Himself and to apply His truths to our lives. 将上帝的真理践行出来。

■ **The fruit God produced through him:** Paul traveled throughout the Roman Empire telling people about Christ and founding churches in various cities. But sometimes false teachers led those churches astray after he left. Paul could have become discouraged and walked away from his ministry, but he didn't. Instead, he wrote letters of correction and encouragement to the churches. Because he was faithful in fulfilling his calling, the gospel traveled throughout the Roman Empire and is still being proclaimed around the world. 结合神心意的果子!

■ **The hope of the Lord's promised reward:** We should never give up walking with Christ through difficult times, because there is more to life than our current circumstances. Paul knew that he had a "crown of righteousness" awaiting him in heaven (2 Tim. 4:8). Our heavenly Father has promised to reward each of us, His children, for our faithfulness. He rewards us for raising godly 提摩西:8

children, loving our spouses, sharing our faith, being diligent in our work, or standing up for the truth.

■ **The vision of the cross before him:** Paul's only boast was in the cross of Christ because he knew it was the reason he could survive and keep going (Gal. 6:14). When Jesus willingly sacrificed Himself on our behalf, He set the ultimate example of perseverance. Just as He endured the cross for our salvation, so we are to persist through hardship in order to receive His promised reward. He never overlooks our obedience, devotion, or endurance.

■ **Love and devotion to Jesus Christ:** If we truly love Jesus, our loyalty will not be reserved only for the good times, but we'll remain faithful and obedient even when we experience intense pain and suffering. When Paul was in prison, he described his devotion most beautifully with these words: "For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain" (Phil. 1:21). Isn't that what we truly want in life—to live fully for the Lord so others can see His life displayed in us?

RESPONSE

- What is a recent hardship that you or a loved one has endured?
- Why does God allow us to experience challenging situations that feel almost unbearable as we go through them?
- How has the Lord given you an awareness of His presence that helped you undergo a particularly difficult situation?
- What have you learned about persevering in the Christian life that can be shared with others?

Thank God, Paul did not quit or walk away!
God won't bless the quitter!!
God, I am hanging in there (because you're with me)!

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Sermon Notes

Practical Lessons for Understanding the Word of God



勇敢地面对困难

Courage for the Difficult Tasks

書一:1-9

出四:13

書六:1-3

提後-:7

01-08-17

KEY PASSAGE: Joshua 1:1-9 | SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES: Exodus 14:13 | Joshua 6:1-3 | 2 Timothy 1:7

SUMMARY

At some point in our lives, we all face fearful situations.

Perhaps we dread poor health, financial problems, the loss of a loved one, or uncertainty about the future. Or maybe we're afraid of failure because we feel weak and inadequate for a particular task or challenge. Whatever our fears may be, we must learn how to face them as God desires—with courage.

SERMON POINTS

Joshua 1:1-9 was written long ago, but its principles regarding courage are still true for those of us living in the 21st century. 書一:1-9

■ **Fear** is an internal alarm that goes off within us in some fashion when we're facing imminent danger, feeling threatened, or feeling helpless to avoid or change the situation. 懼怕的定义

★ ■ **Courage** is the quality of mind or spirit that enables us to meet danger or face opposition or the challenges of life with fearlessness, calmness, and firmness. 勇敢的定義

According to 2 Timothy 1:7 (KJV), God has not given us a spirit of fear but of power, love, and a sound mind. Furthermore, we have His promises that empower us to walk courageously through every challenge. 提後-:7

Joshua's Situation

After Moses died, God gave Joshua the task of leading His people into the land He'd promised to give them. Although he'd been trained by Moses

and had worked under him, the thought of replacing Moses and taking responsibility for these people must have filled him with fear and trembling. He'd seen how rebellious and unbelieving they had been.

Joshua also knew what a challenge it would be to lead two million Israelites into enemy territory. The land was filled with walled cities, giants, well-armed soldiers, and chariots. Although these obstacles seemed insurmountable, Joshua remembered how God fought for His people by parting the water for them and burying the Egyptians and their chariots in the depths of the sea (Ex. 14:13). 出四:13

The Basis for Courage

The Lord's promises were the basis for Joshua's courage. Today our courage as believers comes from our relationship to God through His Son. Although our situations differ from Joshua's, the principles and promises revealed in this passage are true for us as well.

■ **God's promise to Joshua.** "Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you" (v. 1:5). We have this same assurance because God is living within us through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. Whatever fearful situations we face, we are not alone. Instead of looking around at the circumstances, we should look up to the Lord who is always faithful.

■ **Joshua's responsibility.** "Only be strong and courageous; be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go" (v. 7).

God didn't give Joshua a war plan for victory. His success would only come by keeping his eyes on

上帝是昨日对摩西及约书亚的应许及教导，也是是今日对我们的应许及教导。

约书亚曾亲眼看见神分开红海

基督徒的勇敢(勇气)来自于三位一体的神的同在

神的应许与同在！是神给了我们人的责任

不是胆怯的心，乃是刚强，仁爱，谨守(节制，有节制)的心

the Lord and doing exactly what He commanded in His Word. This was not a task to be done with natural strength but with obedience.

This is the same blueprint for victory that God gives us. We are to do what He says, when He says, and how He says to do it. There is no room for picking and choosing which Scripture passages to believe and obey and which to ignore. The success God promises is not that of the world. In His eyes success is a godly life that He can use as a witness to the world and a challenge to fellow believers.

The Key to Courage

勇敢來自認識並遵守神的話
聖潔

"This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success" (v. 8).

Daily meditation on God's Word is the key to courageously accomplishing all that He sets before us. It includes five essential elements.

■ **Reading.** We must first know what God has said in His Word. 閱讀並思想及默想

■ **Believing.** Then we should believe His Word and His promises. 相信

■ **Absorbing.** Next, we absorb Scripture into our thinking so we understand it, and it governs our thoughts. 吸收並消化

■ **Applying.** God's Word applied directs our way of living. 實行並遵守

■ **Obedying.** Knowing what God has said, we respond with complete and full obedience. This is the goal of meditation. 順服祂並祂的話

Although college courses and degrees may claim to make us prosperous, nothing can compare to God's path for success. If we'll meditate on His Word daily so we can carefully obey His instructions, we may not be considered successful by the world's standard, but the Lord is the ultimate judge and the one before whom we will stand to give an account of our lives.

God will change your life if you are
humble and trusting Him.

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The command to meditate day and night doesn't mean we must spend hours every morning and evening in God's Word. The Lord can do big work in our lives if we'll simply give Him ten to fifteen minutes every day. By meditating on His Word, we're acknowledging that we need His help because we're not smart enough or strong enough to direct our own lives. As our Lord and Savior, He has every right to tell us what to do, and if we do what He says, He will enable us to live successfully in accordance with His will and plan for us.

默想神的話
認定我們需要
祂的幫助!

God's Warning to Joshua

The Lord emphatically spelled out what Joshua must do in order to succeed at bringing the people into the Promised Land—"Be careful to do according to all that is written in it" (v. 8). Obedience is of utmost importance because God's methods won't always seem reasonable. When the people approached Jericho, the Lord gave Joshua a very strange strategy—march around the city once a day for six days, then seven times on the seventh day. Then shout and the walls will fall down (Josh. 6:3-5). If Joshua had not followed God's directions, he would not have succeeded.

Like Joshua, we must trust the Lord and courageously obey no matter what He may require of us. He will never give us a schedule so full that we have no time to meditate on His Word. As we focus on Him and move forward in obedience, we will be sufficient for everything He calls us to do.

相信神並勇敢地
順服祂

RESPONSE

- What do you fear most in life? What part has God's Word played in how you have handled your fears in the past?
- If you have made meditation of Scripture a vital part of each day, how has it helped you obey the Lord? If not, what can you do to make time for the Lord and His Word in your daily schedule?

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有勇敢对神的旨意及话语相敌的人事物说“不”

Courage to Say No

徒四:18-20

创三:1-7; 九:6-10 士十六:15-21

KEY PASSAGE: Acts 4:18-20 | SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES: Genesis 3:1-7; 39:6-10 | Judges 16:15-21

Isaiah 41:10-12 | Daniel 1:8-16; 6:4-24 | 2 Samuel 11:1-4 | James 1:13

赛四:10-12 但一:8-16; 六:4-28 撒下十:1-4 各一:13

01-15-17

SUMMARY

At some point in our lives, we all face fearful situations.

如可面对人生中令人懼怕的情况

But if we yield to what we know is wrong, our lives will be filled with entanglements and trouble. Therefore, we must consider the source of our desires, learn to discern the difference between good and evil, and have the courage to say no whenever something is contrary to God's will and Word.

good vs. evil 善对於恶

SERMON POINTS

When Peter and John healed a lame man, the Jewish rulers were infuriated and commanded them not to speak or teach in the name of Jesus. But they courageously refused, saying, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge; for we cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:19-20).

徒四:19-20

神中心
要顺服
神不要
顺服人

This is the kind of courage God desires for all of us—obedience to Him without fear of what others may think or do. Instead of being frail Christians who base our decisions on the present situation, let's become followers of Christ who hold firmly to God's standards of right and wrong.

要做基督耶稣的跟随者!

Biblical Examples of Courage

约瑟和但以理的例证

■ Joseph (Gen. 39:6-10). When Joseph was sold into slavery in Egypt, he was purchased by Potiphar, who eventually put him in charge of his entire household. Because Potiphar's wife was attracted to him, she repeatedly tried to seduce him. But Joseph refused, saying, "How then could I do this great evil and sin against God?" (v. 9). Although his refusal to yield to temptation landed him in jail,

诗一八:1 要敬畏上帝,遵守祂的话。

创九:6-10

不可犯
这大罪
得罪
神!

when Potiphar's wife falsely accused him of rape, God used the situation to elevate him to a place of authority second only to Pharaoh.

■ Daniel (Dan. 1:8-16). After Daniel was taken into captivity in Babylon, the king ordered that he and his three friends be given food from his table. But Daniel didn't want to defile himself with food that had been offered to idols so he asked the commander if they might have vegetables and water. When the commander objected, Daniel wisely suggested that he test them for ten days to see how the new diet affected their appearance. At the end of the allotted time, Daniel and his friends looked healthier than all the other youths. God honored Daniel's courageous choice and protected him from defiling himself with the king's food.

但一:8-16

Obey God!

When Daniel was much older, he faced another challenge (Dan. 6:4-24). By this time he was one of the highest officials in the land, and the other commissioners were jealous of him. They convinced the king to pass an edict that anyone who makes a petition to any other god be thrown into a lion's den. Knowing the consequences, Daniel continued to pray to the Lord three times a day and shortly thereafter was thrown into a den of hungry lions. But once again the Lord protected him and closed the lions' mouths.

但六:4-24

Biblical Examples of Yielding to Temptation

创三:1-7

■ Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:1-7). Eve was the first person who said yes to temptation, and Adam soon followed, bringing a curse upon the earth and sin into the human race.

要居中
試探中失敗
的例子:

■ David (2 Sam. 11:1-4). Instead of saying no to his lust, David committed adultery with Bathsheba

撒下十:1-4

大衛

and suffered the horrible consequences for the rest of his life—the death of his son, betrayal by another son, and the loss of his kingdom for a short while. 士廿六:15-21

- **Samson** (Judg. 16:15-21). After Delilah repeatedly pleaded and cried, Samson gave up the secret of his strength and suffered the loss of his eyes and freedom, and eventually his life. 參孫

Questions to Ask When Facing Temptation

Before saying yes to temptation, we should ask ourselves the following questions: 神絕不試探人

- **What is the source of this offer?** God never tempts us to do anything sinful or evil (James 1:13). Any desire that veers from truth and righteousness is from the devil. Instead of being carried away by the pleasure or benefits of the offer, we must focus on the Lord and remember what He thinks about it. 各:13
- **What are the requirements of this offer?** Yielding to temptation requires that we lay down our convictions. Sin is always expensive because it costs us our honesty, purity, and integrity.
- **What are the consequences of this act?** When temptation comes, we usually think only about the present, not the long-term consequences. But the satisfaction of the moment is never worth the pain and guilt that inevitably follows. *思想並覺察惡果*

Why do people hesitate to say no to temptation?

- 失敗於試探:原因:害怕失去我們想要,想擁有的
- **Fear of rejection.** If we don't follow along with what others want us to do, we may not be accepted. However, being rejected by someone because of our convictions reveals something good about us—that we have a strong relationship with God and are committed to obeying Him.
- **Fear of losing a relationship.** We may think that saying no could result in losing a friend or never getting married, but any time we lay down a relationship in order to remain obedient to God, we are positioning ourselves to be blessed by Him.
- **Fear of the loss of finances.** The temptation to steal or cheat is often fueled by a fear of losing money or not having enough.

- **Fear of the loss of an opportunity.** Sometimes we feel pressured to make an unwise decision, fearing that the opportunity may never come again. However, if this opportunity is not from God, it could have devastating results. But if we live in obedience to the Lord, He will place us exactly where he wants us and open doors in accordance with His will.

- **Fear of the loss of our self-image.** In an effort to feel good about ourselves, we may be tempted to pursue what the world values—the finest clothes, cars, homes, and jobs—without considering that we might be living in disobedience to God. He knows what is best for us and will direct our future if we'll follow Him instead of the world.

The Source of Our Courage to Obey 順服神:勇氣來自於: 賽四-:10-12

- **The Promise of God's Word** (Isa. 41:10-12). Meditation upon Scripture is our greatest defense against disobedience. The Lord's promises help us trust and obey Him, knowing He will handle all the consequences. 神的應許及真理!我是神所揀選及所愛的!
- **Prayer and Meditation.** This is our daily defense as we humble ourselves before God, reading His Word, talking to Him about our situations, and asking for His help. 禱告及默想神的話!
- **The Indwelling Holy Spirit.** He's the one who empowers us to resist temptation and obey God. 聖靈內住:帶領及保守!

RESPONSE

- In the past, what has caused you to yield to temptation? What consequences followed?
- In contrast, how have you been strengthened to say no to temptation? What did God do in your life as a result?
- Looking ahead, how can you courageously resist temptation in the future?

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God, Lord, my Savior, Helper, Protector & Friend
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不
傾倒的勇氣

A Collapse of Courage

民十三-十四

申三一:6; 書一:9

1-22-17

KEY PASSAGE: Numbers 13-14 | SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES: Deuteronomy 31:6 | Joshua 1:9

SUMMARY

Oftentimes people work very hard to achieve a particular goal, yet at the edge of seeing their dream come to pass, they miss it.

One of the reasons is because they don't have the courage to grasp what God has provided. They may have even prayed and hoped that He would answer, but when He does, their courage collapses.

SERMON POINTS

Courage is the quality of mind or spirit enabling one to meet danger or face opposition or the challenges of life with fearlessness, calmness, and firmness.

The story in Numbers 13-14 is an illustration of what happens when we lose our courage and fail to follow through in full obedience to the Lord.

Israel's Situation

民十三-十四章

After God had miraculously rescued the Israelites from Egyptian slavery, parted the Red Sea for their escape, and led them through the wilderness to Mount Sinai, He gave them His law that was to govern their nation and their worship. From there, He led them across the desert until they arrived at the edge of the land He'd promised to give them.

At this point, the Lord told Moses to select twelve leaders from each of the tribes to spy out the land and return with a report (13:1-2). The spies came back with a sample of the fruit—some figs, pomegranates, and a single cluster of grapes so big that it was carried on a pole between two men. The land was certainly fruitful and productive. However, the cities were large and strongly fortified, and the people were extremely strong. The spies even reported seeing giants there.

The Spies' Reports

Because God had promised to give the Israelites the land, Caleb said, "We should by all means go up and take possession of it, for we will surely overcome it" (13:30). But ten of the spies discouraged the people by giving a bad report. Instead of remembering God's promise and power, these spies focused on the situation and raised the following objections.

- "We are not able to go up against the people, for they are too strong for us" (v. 31).
- "The land . . . devours its inhabitants" (v. 32).
- "We became like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight" (v. 33).

As a result of the negative report, the people wept, grumbled, and accused the Lord of bringing them to this land "to fall by the sword" (14:3). They wanted to stone Moses, Aaron, Joshua, and Caleb and appoint another leader to take them back to Egypt. How quickly they forgot their previous slavery and God's supernatural work on their behalf.

The Reasons for the Collapse of Courage

The Israelites came to the wrong conclusion for several reasons.

- **They forgot God's promise.** Although the Lord had promised to give them the land, the people let the negative reports overshadow and diminish what God had said.
- **They focused on their resources rather than the Lord's.** Looking at their own abilities, they saw no way to defeat the people of the land. But God has the power to do whatever is required to fulfill His promises whether we understand His ways or not.
- **They chose to listen to doubters rather than believers.** When the people rejected the counsel

negative people vs. godly & courageous people
* What does God want!

* 要相信聖靈上所記載神的能力及應許 *

of the two men who believed God would empower them to defeat their enemies, but instead listened to the spies who doubted Him, they made a disastrous decision. That's why we should be careful about taking advice from those who don't believe in the Lord's power and promises in Scripture. 沒有神參與決定

- **They left God out of the decision process.** Even though Joshua and Caleb encouraged them to believe that the Lord could bring them into the land, the people didn't even consider Him in their reasoning. We are often guilty of the same thing. Instead of seeking God's will in the matter, we rely on information, opinions, and our own reasoning. Like the Israelites, we have the promise of His presence, power, and provision to enable us to accomplish whatever He calls us to do if we will only trust and obey Him. 負面之報告掩蓋了神的

- **They allowed negative reports to overshadow God's promises.** After hearing about all the obstacles that awaited them in the Promised Land, they didn't remember all that God had done for them in the past. After being supernaturally rescued from Egypt and given divine provision in the wilderness, they had no legitimate reason for doubting that the Lord could bring them into the land. But they listened to men, not the Lord.

- **They forgot God's previous promises and work in their lives.** Instead of realizing that the Lord had brought them this far and would take them into the land, they wanted a new leader to take them back to Egypt. They refused to believe the Lord's promise and trust Him to overcome their enemies. Any time we leave God out of the equation, we're going to make foolish choices.

The Consequences 不順服不聽從神的後果:

Everything the Israelites longed for was across the border, but because they wouldn't obey the Lord, His judgment came upon them. He declared that they would wander in the wilderness for forty years until all the men who were twenty years and older when they left Egypt had died. When they heard this, they

changed their minds and went out to take possession of Canaan, but because the Lord wasn't with them, they were defeated.

Sometimes God gives us opportunities that only come once. If our courage fails, we will never receive a second chance. This is why obedience is so important, even if we're afraid or reluctant. When we live in daily obedience to God, we'll never miss the opportunities He has for us, and He will supply whatever we need to accomplish what He's called us to do.

The Key to Obedience

Meditation on God's Word keeps us in line with His will. This includes reading the Scripture each day, talking to God, and bringing Him every issue that concerns us. The promises we need to strengthen our obedience are found in His Word. Scripture has the power to change our minds and attitudes from fear and uncertainty to confident courage. And it also reminds us that we are never alone if Jesus is our Savior. His Spirit lives within us, giving us guidance to know what to do and the power to accomplish it. When we trust the Lord and believe His promises, we have nothing to fear as we courageously move forward in obedience.

God wants the best of us!

RESPONSE

- Have you ever lost your courage to obey the Lord? What happened as a result? Did you receive a second chance, or was the opportunity forever lost?
- When you face a challenge, what are your first thoughts and reactions? How has focusing on the Word of God strengthened you to obey despite the obstacles and difficulties?

神的審判
來到，我們失敗...

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Sermon Notes

Practical Lessons for Understanding the Word of God



面对危险及死亡的勇敢 (使徒保罗的例证)

The Courage to Face Danger and Death

提後四:6-8

徒九:1-6, 18-20 林前二:11-17

KEY PASSAGE: 2 Timothy 4:6-8 | SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES: Acts 9:1-6, 18-20 | 1 Corinthians 2:11-17

2 Corinthians 11:23-27 | 2 Timothy 1:7; 4:5, 9-17 | Hebrews 9:27

* 林後十一:23-27

提後一:7; 四:5; 九:17 来九:27

01/29/17

SUMMARY

At some point in our lives, we will probably encounter dangerous situations, and eventually we'll all face death. 心裡做好準備並信靠神;

Therefore, it's important that we be prepared to respond with confidence and trust in God. As Christians we have a basis for courage that other people don't have. No matter what happens, we know the Lord is always with us, He's the source of our strength, and our ultimate destiny is heaven. 与我们同在!

SERMON POINTS

The apostle Paul experienced many dangers during his lifetime, and as he wrote his last letter to Timothy, he was soon going to face death. Knowing that Timothy would experience similar challenges, Paul encouraged him with these words: "For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline" (2 Tim. 1:7). 提後一:7

Paul's life was an amazing example of perseverance through dangers, suffering, and threats of death. According to 2 Corinthians 11:23-27, he experienced imprisonments, beatings, scourgings, shipwrecks, and dangers from travel, weather, robbers, the Jews, the Gentiles, and false brethren. Having courageously lived through all these hardships, Paul had a platform of authority for his message to Timothy. 神赐我们刚强、仁爱、谨守的心! 坚忍不拔的毅力! 要勇敢!

Descriptions of Courage

- Courage is a quality of mind or spirit that enables a person to meet danger and death or face opposition or the challenges of life with fearlessness, calmness, and firmness.

勇敢/壮胆: 心灵的好品质: 不害怕, 不畏惧, 平穩及镇定来面对困难, 危险, 反对势力, 逼迫, 受苦及死亡. 信心勇敢: 根源是神!

- Courage is doing what we are afraid to do. Hold on one more minute.
- Courage is fear that has said its prayers. 多等一分钟! (忍, 忍, 忍)
- Courage is fear that holds on one more minute. 林後十一:24-33

This is the type of courage Paul had, and the kind God wants all of us to possess. As His people we have no reason to be afraid because He lives within us and will bring us through every situation—even death.

The Reasons for Paul's Courage 使徒保罗勇敢心的来源

At the end of this letter to Timothy, Paul gave his personal testimony, which reveals why he was willing to face suffering, danger, and death. 徒九

- His Redemptive Experience on the Damascus Road. Earlier in his life, Paul, who was then called Saul, was a zealous persecutor of the church. Having received permission from the Jewish leaders to go to Damascus to imprison more believers, he was on his way when a light from heaven suddenly flashed around him. As he fell to the ground, he heard a voice saying, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" (Acts 9:4). Saul asked, "Who are You, Lord?" and the voice answered, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting" (v. 5). This was the turning point in Paul's life. He was converted from a vicious persecutor of the church to Christ's appointed messenger of the gospel. Since he knew Jesus, Paul was now willing to suffer persecution and death in order to obey Him.

- The Race He'd Run As a Follower of Jesus. After his conversion, Paul's goal was to spread the gospel, knowing that it had eternal consequences. That's why he was willing to face suffering, rejection, and persecution as he walked obediently with Jesus. Even when he was close to death, he faced it

耶稣与圣徒同经历迫害!

* God rewards His children

有勇氣

打義子的仗
(不退縮)

跑當跑的路
(不停止)

恩上加恩,
力上加力。

新信的道
傳福音
真理真道
得救福音

提後四:7.

courageously, knowing that he had successfully run the race Christ had given him (2 Tim. 4:7).

• **"I have fought the good fight."** Paul continually met opposition from those who refused to believe his message about Christ. But even though they stoned, imprisoned, and beat him, he kept declaring the gospel that saved him on the Damascus road.

• **"I have finished the course."** Paul likened the Christian life to a race and knew that he had accomplished all that the Lord had called him to do. Despite all the hardships, he never gave up, but continued to follow Jesus obediently until the day of his death.

Like Paul, we too have a course to run that has been individually chosen for us by God. Since He doesn't call all of us to accomplish the same things, we can't compare our lives with someone else's. Our aim should be to stay faithful and obedient to Him in whatever He's planned for us and to run the race with endurance until the last day of our lives.

• **"I have kept the faith."** The truths that Paul learned from the Lord he faithfully passed on to everyone who would listen. This was the treasure he entrusted to Timothy so that he could carry it forward into the coming generation. And this same gospel message is still being proclaimed today. We each have the responsibility to keep the faith, defend it, and pass it on to the next generation.

course, and keeping the faith. In heaven, our works will be evaluated by God for the purpose of rewards. Since He is perfect and knows everything about us, we can trust that He will judge righteously. According to 1 Corinthians 3:11-17, our works will be tested by fire to reveal their true value. Those that burn up like wood, hay, and straw will not be worthy of a reward. However, those that are truly valuable will be like gold, silver, and precious stones that can withstand the fire. For these deeds we will be rewarded.

True, faith and hope will last forever.

The Remembrance That God Was With Him

As Paul closed his last letter to Timothy, he recounted the hardships, mistreatments, and abandonment he'd endured as he neared the end of his life (2 Tim. 4:9-16). However, he concluded with these words: "But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, so that through me the proclamation might be fully accomplished, and that all the Gentiles might hear; and I was rescued out of the lion's mouth" (v. 17). Paul knew that God was always with him no matter how people treated him or what dangerous situations he experienced. He courageously faced death knowing that the Lord would bring him safely to His heavenly kingdom. And as believers, we have this same promise to give us hope and courage until the day we take our last breath.

提後四:17

主在我身並賜我力量恩典
來渡過每一天

The Reward Awaiting Him After Death

"In the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing" (2 Tim. 4:8). Since Paul had lived an obedient life, faithfully carrying out the ministry Christ had given him, he was confident that his death would not result in loss but in reward.

And the same is true for each of us who follow his example by fighting the good fight, finishing our

→ *eternal life and eternal together with God & his children forever.*

永生永樂的家!



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RESPONSE

■ How prepared do you feel to face danger or death? What promises from God's Word would silence your fears and give you the courage you need?

■ Like Paul, do you feel confident that you are fighting the good fight, finishing your course, and keeping the faith? How does his example motivate you to live more faithfully for the Lord?

公義的獎賞
榮耀的獎賞!

信心的順服及勇敢

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Sermon Notes

Practical Lessons for Understanding the Word of God



做一个鼓励的朋友 Being an Encourager

帖前五:1-14

太六:14, 25-34; 七:7; 十四:19-21; 可六:47-51; 十:46-52

KEY PASSAGE: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-14 | SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES: Matthew 6:14, 25-34; 7:7; 14:19-21

Mark 6:47-51; 10:46-52 | John 8:2-11; 11:38-44; 14:16-18; 16:1-7; 19:26-27 | Acts 14:19-20; 27:21-36

Romans 8:38-39 | 1 Corinthians 15:20-58 | Galatians 5:22-23 | Ephesians 1:4, 13-14 | Philippians 4:6, 19

约八:2-11; 十:38-44; 十四:16-18; 十五:1-7; 帖前五:1-14; 西三:18-21; 帖前四:13-18

林前四:21; 林后四:19-20; 二七:21-36; 罗八:38-39; 林前十五:20-58; 加五:22-23; 弗一:4; 13-14; 腓四:6, 19

SUMMARY

We all experience times and situations when we need an encourager—someone who lifts us up if we're down, motivates us to keep going when we want to give up, and stands with us through every challenging circumstance.

What's more, each of us needs to be an encourager to someone else. There are people all around us who are discouraged and could use a word of comfort or an act of kindness. Whether friends, family members, acquaintances, or strangers, we could make a tremendous difference in someone's life and give them a glimpse of Christ as we follow His example of compassion and kindness.

SERMON POINTS

When Paul wrote to the church in Thessalonica, he encouraged them with assurances of Christ's return and information about what to expect.

Then he said, "Therefore encourage one another and build up one another just as you also are doing" (1 Thess. 5:11). The Greek word for an encourager is "parakletos," which means "one who is called alongside." And that's exactly what we are to do for one another—come alongside to help.

The night before His crucifixion, Jesus told the disciples that although He was leaving, He would send them another Helper (John 14:16-18). This is the same Greek word "parakletos." Up until that point, Jesus had walked beside them, but now someone like Him would come and actually live within them—the Holy Spirit, the third member of the Trinity.

* encourager: en-courage-er
in-courage

to instill fresh courage into someone (who is faltering)

Jesus—Our primary example of an encourager

Christ's teachings were filled with words of encouragement on various subjects.

■ **Prayer.** He taught His disciples to expect answers to prayer. "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened" (Matt. 7:7).

■ **Forgiveness.** Jesus showed them the importance and benefits of forgiving others (Matt. 6:14).

■ **Anxiety.** Using the example of God's provision for flowers and birds as proof of His care for them, He told the people not to be anxious (Matt. 6:25-34).

■ **Sin.** When the Pharisees and Sadducees brought Him a woman caught in adultery, He didn't condemn her but said, "Go [and] sin no more" (John 8:11).

■ **The Spirit.** Christ's most encouraging message was given to His disciples the night before His death. He told them of the persecution they'd soon face but also assured them that He would send His Spirit to be with them forever (John 16:1-7).

Jesus encouraged people with His actions, providing whatever was needed.

■ **Provision.** After teaching a large crowd, He felt compassion for them because they were in an isolated place and had nothing to eat. Taking five loaves and two fish, He multiplied them to feed a crowd of over five thousand people (Matt. 14:19-21).

■ **Protection.** When His disciples were caught in a storm on the sea and in danger of sinking, Jesus came to them walking on the water saying, "Take courage; it is I, do not be afraid" (Mark 6:47-51).

■ **Healing.** On His way to Jerusalem, Jesus was not alone. He was accompanied by Barnabas, son of encouragement (巴拿巴) Acts 4:36 (徒四:36).

1 Samuel 23:16 Jonathan strengthened David's hand in God.
撒母耳下23:16 约拿单使大卫倚靠上帝得以坚固。约拿单安慰大卫坚固大卫，提醒他不要惧怕(117)

too busy to heal Bartimaeus, a poor, blind beggar who cried out to Him for mercy (Mark 10:46-52).

■ **Life.** When Mary and Martha were grieving over the death of their brother, Jesus demonstrated His power by raising him to life (John 11:38-44).

■ **Care.** Even in the midst of His suffering on the cross, Jesus was concerned for His mother and told John to take care of her (John 19:26-27).

祂使死人復活

祂關心我們

Paul—Another example of an encourager

Christ transformed the apostle Paul from a persecutor of the church into His chosen messenger of the gospel. Wherever he went, he proclaimed Christ and encouraged believers. His life is an example of one who never gave up but kept trusting God and persevering despite opposition and affliction.

保羅生
困苦患
難中依
然安慰
並堅固
其他信徒
成為我們
的榜樣

■ **Persecution.** Although Paul was stoned and left for dead in Lystra, this didn't stop him. Amazingly, he got up and went to another town the next day to proclaim the gospel there (Acts 14:19-20).

■ **Imprisonment.** Paul was repeatedly jailed for preaching about Jesus, yet he never felt sorry for himself. The Spirit within him was his Comforter.

■ **Shipwreck.** As Paul was being transported to Rome for imprisonment, the ship was in danger of sinking because of a storm. When everyone was discouraged and losing hope, Paul encouraged them not to give up (Acts 27:21-36).

One of the ways Paul still encourages us today is through the letters he wrote to the churches.

保羅勸勉我們的
信文

■ **Romans.** Nothing can "separate us from the love of God ... in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:38-39).

羅8:38-39

■ **Galatians.** The Holy Spirit manifests through us qualities we could never produce ourselves—"Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control" (Gal. 5:22-23).

加5:22-23

■ **Corinthians.** We are assured of our future resurrection (1 Cor. 15:20-58).

林前15:20-58

■ **Ephesians.** God chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world and sealed us as His

children with His Spirit (Eph. 1:4, 13-14).

弗1:4, 13-14

■ **Philippians.** He promises to supply all our needs "according to His riches in glory" (Phil. 4:19).

腓4:19

■ **Colossians.** We have God's instructions regarding our relationships with each other (Col. 3:18-21).

西3:18-21

■ **Thessalonians.** We are given hope for our loved ones' resurrection and our ultimate reunion with Christ (1 Thess. 4:13-18).

帖前4:13-18

要裝備及下定決心成為鼓勵別人的人

How to become an encourager with our speech:

■ Give a sincere compliment.

真誠地肯定

■ Speak the truth with love. Agree when appropriate.

■ Pass on helpful information.

以愛心說誠實話

■ Encourage with Scripture and pray for them.

■ Correct them when it's appropriate.

用聖經經文
以禱告的心

■ Let them know you love them.

■ Comfort and assure them when they need it.

■ Say thank you.

安慰並堅固他：藉真神的愛

With our actions:

以行動表證證明我的真誠

■ Offer a smile or give a gift.

■ Don't interrupt but listen quietly.

■ Hug them. Forgive them. Serve them.

■ Point out their accomplishments and reward them.

■ Be honest and patient.

■ Accept them as they are.

■ Point them in the right direction.

■ Motivate them to be and do their best.

感恩
饒恕
肯定
真誠
耐心
引導
幫助
付出一切金錢
禱告幫助

RESPONSE

■ Do you know someone who is an encourager? How has their encouragement affected your life?

■ Have you encouraged lately? What words or actions did you use?

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LIFE PRINCIPLES NOTES

Practical Lessons for Understanding the Word of God



克服畏胆

Overcoming Discouragement

~ 不灰心, 不失信, 不畏胆, 不放弃, 不要妥协 ~

撒三:1-6
7:25

詩四:11
四:5
-0三:19

箴三:5-6
五:4

可六:30-31
来十三:5

KEY PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 30:1-6 | SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE: 1 Samuel 30:7-25 | Psalm 42:11; 43:5; 103:19
Proverbs 3:5-6; 15:4 | Mark 6:30-31 | Hebrews 13:5

SUMMARY:

Are you discouraged?

Maybe your family is hurting, you have lost your job, or the latest news is depressing. In circumstances like these, you might wonder, God, where are you? Why haven't you acted by now? Why haven't you helped me out of this?

Discouragement is a common response to the challenges of life. Even David, who experienced great spiritual triumphs, had some powerful emotional struggles. In Psalm 42:11, he wrote: "Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him." His reaction must have been similar after Ziklag, his home at the time, was destroyed. David was able to find victory in that situation in part because he knew how to overcome discouragement.

SCRIPTURAL PRINCIPLES:

David's Example

While David and his fellow warriors were away, the Amalekites raided their town, burned everything, and captured their wives and children. The men were so devastated when they learned the news that they wanted to stone David to death. So in the midst of his heartbreak over his family, David had to deal with the pain of betrayal and the fear of losing his life.

How did David respond? He "strengthened himself in the Lord his God" (1 Sam. 30:6). In other words, he encouraged himself. He turned to God, who promised him victory if he would pursue the attackers (1 Sam. 30:18).

* v.8 大卫求问耶和华 *

Discouragement Described

Can you relate to the discouragement David felt? Most likely, you can. Discouragement is universal—everyone has been dismayed at some time. It is also recurring—you may overcome discouragement, only to face it again. Avoid those who indulge in negativity and self-pity since discouragement is contagious. It is unpredictable—you never know when it will strike. Finally, it is temporary—it will pass if you respond to it correctly.

Discouragement and disappointment are often used as synonyms. But there is a difference. Disappointment is unavoidable. When our expectations aren't met, we feel disappointed with people, events, and circumstances. But discouragement (a feeling of despair and despondency) is a choice. We can choose to remain dejected or determine to work through our feelings and overcome them.

Causes of Discouragement

Inability to Please Significant People

Don't become someone who is impossible to satisfy. You will discourage those closest to you by your perfectionist ways.

Physical or Verbal Abuse

This kind of strife usually leads to discouragement.

Unanswered Prayer

When God is silent, ask Him to reveal anything that is hindering your prayers. Remember, His timing is often different than ours.

Lack of Proper Recognition

If you give your best, it's natural to expect a word of praise, a thank you, and sometimes even a great promotion.

Disappointments are inevitable, but discouragement is a choice.

失望不可避免, 但

永不灰心, 不畏胆

destructive

discouragement vs. ENCOURAGEMENT.

Addicti

- **Strongholds**—Those who are trapped in sin often feel discouraged.
- **Financial Pressure**—This is a common cause of depression, especially in these difficult economic times.
- **Health Problems**—Discouragement often accompanies life-threatening, debilitating, or incurable illnesses.
- **Adversity**—When bad things happen, we may ask, "God, how could You let this happen?"
- **Feelings of Worthlessness**—Those who feel unloved, unappreciated, or unimportant often struggle with this emotion.

Consequences of Discouragement

- **Divided Attention**—If you feel discouraged, you may not be able to work wholeheartedly. For instance, if you are discouraged about your marriage, you might not do your best at work. And if a relationship at work is difficult, it could affect emotions at home with family.
- **Blaming Others**—David's soldiers accused him of the Amalekite attack. When you feel down, don't dwell on the wrongs of others.
- **Anger and Depression**—Some people turn to medication to feel better emotionally. Unless you address the inner roots of discouragement, you will never overcome negative feelings.
- **Estrangement**—You might push people away because you are constantly grumbling.
- **Loss of Confidence**—Every aspect of your life will suffer when you feel unsure of yourself.
- **Negative Spirit**—Complaining leads to discouragement (Prov. 15:4). Don't rehash painful events. You will only make them seem worse than they are.
- **Unwise Decisions**—Discouragement can cloud your judgment. Work through your feelings first, then you can make a careful, godly decision about taking the next step.
- **Spiritual Drift**—Depression opens the door to doubt. Before long you may wonder if God is all-powerful and question His love for you.

Cures for Discouragement

- 1. **Change your perspective.** There are several steps to this process. First, look within. Answer the question, "Why am I discouraged?" Second, look to God. He is all powerful, and He can rescue you from discouragement. Third, look back. Don't dwell on hurtful things from the past. Instead, think about how God has been faithful to deliver you. Fourth, look ahead.
- 2. **Focus on what God is doing now in your life.** Be encouraged by what He has planned for you in the future.
- 3. **Have the right response.** Responding correctly to discouragement involves several things. First, rest. Physical and emotional exhaustion often lead to discouragement. Second, reorganize your life. Evaluate how you are using your time, energy, and other resources. Make sure you are doing the right things in the right way. Third, resolve to trust God. Believe that He is in control (Ps. 103:19), that He loves you, and that He will never leave you (Heb. 13:5). He can turn adversity into something good. Fourth, resist discouragement. Ask God to show you how to respond to difficulty. You will be amazed at the difference a positive attitude makes.

RESPONSE:

- Can you think of a time in your life when discouragement felt like more than you could handle on your own?
- How has God sustained you and lifted your spirits through times of disheartenment?
- What has been a direct consequence of discouragement for you?
- How can you encourage someone today who is struggling with feelings of despair?

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LIFE PRINCIPLES NOTES | LP100441

ABLE
-hance

rich men
lightest
shine

look
listen
like
love

Mark 6:30

every 3 months
life is moving
so rapid

Hungry
A
Lonely
Tired

Bi
u
I

listen & believe Him.
He will Remedy
it.

more efficiently, less time

We won't face alone!

You & He can't never be separated.
He is on our team. He will see me through it.

not have
to be

保平安

peace
joyce
contentment.

humble

* Are you too big to do the dirty job?
→ read God's Book!

Sermon Notes

Practical Lessons for Understanding the Word of God



~当我们不知为什么~

When We Don't Understand Why

05/10/15, 09/25/16

* We humble ourselves; God of all grace. God's ways & thoughts. loving kindness, mercy

KEY PASSAGE: 1 Peter 5:6-10 | SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 55:8-9 | Lamentations 3:22-23 | Romans 8:28
2 Corinthians 12:7 | Ephesians 6:10-17 | Philippians 4:4 | 1 Thessalonians 5:18 | Hebrews 13:5 | 1 Peter 1:7

Hymn: By and By, There is (not) no mystery to God.

若是出於神,我就默然不語...

SUMMARY

Trials, difficulties, and suffering bring out a variety of attitudes and responses.

試煉
困難
受苦

Some people become angry with God for allowing the situation while others are able to rejoice in Him knowing that He's doing something good in their lives through the hardship. But one of the most common responses is to want to know why this has happened. What is the purpose? Why me, my child, or my family? Yet so many times, we don't understand, and God doesn't reveal the reason to us. How should we respond then?

Remember: blessed, promised land, God's grace

SERMON POINTS

記得以下事義真理

When you don't understand why something has happened, remember these basic truths.

■ First of all, we need to understand that the Lord's perspective is complete, having full knowledge of the past, present, and future. Ours, on the other hand, is very limited, which sometimes leads us to a wrong attitude toward God and the situation. But the Lord understands every facet of the difficulty and knows why it has happened and what He desires to accomplish through it.

神是
全知的

■ Second, we must remember that the Lord is full of love, righteousness, mercy, goodness, and kindness. Whatever He's allowed in our lives is motivated by these qualities.

神的全善及道路高過我們的

■ Third, we need to recognize that God's thoughts and ways are higher than ours (Isa. 55:8-9). There are some things we will never understand because they are beyond our human comprehension. That's when

神是
全善
全愛
全公義
全良善

Whenever you experience pain, disappointment, or distress, how do you respond?

如何面對反正是更重要!

■ Do you see it as God's way of getting your attention? This should be our first thought when a trial of some kind suddenly hits us. Sometimes God has to use strong means to get us to focus on Him because we often pay little attention to Him when our lives are running smoothly. But if an accident, a job situation, or trouble in our family hits, we're stopped in our tracks and immediately turn to the only One who can help.

神的話語是
我的盾牌!

■ Is God using this to remind you to be totally dependent upon Him? The Lord's will is that we always rely on Him for every aspect of our lives, but our natural tendency is to get along without Him when we can handle life on our own. However, when a situation arises that we cannot fix, solve, or change, we suddenly realize how helpless we are and how much we need the Lord.

認識我們是何等
的無助及無能,
何等需要主!

* Attitude: growing through pain, don't waste time and opportunities to grow.

- God, what are you up to? God's permissive will; in His will
- There are no accidents!
- Be thankful

凡事謝恩! 凡事靠主恩典! 要有信心, 勇氣及盼望!!

理文:
彼前五:6-10
賽五五:8-9
哀三:22-23
羅八:28
林後十二:7
弗六:10-17
腓四:4
帖前五:18
來十三:5
彼前一:7

讓主作主

哀三:22-23

神所托的
信實何等廣大

要從神的眼光
及堅實的真理藉

神必眷顧我
祂必與我同在

彼前五:6-10

■ **Could this be a satanic attack?** Since we have an enemy who's seeking to devour us, we must consider whether he's the source of our difficulties (1 Pet. 5:8). Since God has provided His spiritual armor for our protection, we must put it on each day so we'll be ready for the devil's assault (Eph. 6:10-17). **弗六:10-17 要穿上神所赐的全副军装**

■ **Is God testing your faith?** The Lord's purpose in using trials to test us is not to see what we will do (He already knows that), but to strengthen our faith through the experience. He wants us to understand that every hardship or pain is an opportunity for spiritual growth and ever increasing trust in Him.

Do you have the right to ask God why you're going through pain or difficulty?

■ **It's a natural response.** Although our focus should be on how the Lord wants us to respond, we have the freedom to ask Him why He's let something bad happen to us.

■ **However, God is under no obligation to answer our question.** His thoughts and ways are higher than ours, and He doesn't always share them with us, but He always invites us to use our suffering to grow and learn. Our response determines whether we benefit from the situation or suffer in vain.

■ **But sometimes the Lord will give us a reason.** When Paul asked that his "thorn in the flesh" be removed, God told him that its purpose was to keep him from exalting himself (2 Cor. 12:7). Knowing this, Paul was able to rejoice because he trusted the Lord and recognized that He was protecting him from pride and teaching him to depend upon Christ's strength, thereby ensuring the effectiveness of his ministry.

How should you respond to suffering and pain when you don't understand why God allowed it?

■ **Remember that you are a child of God and He's watching over you.** You may not understand His plan, but He knows exactly where you are and what He's accomplishing in your life.

■ **Recall that the Lord is always with you.** Even if you cannot feel His presence, the Lord will never leave or forsake you (Heb. 13:5).

■ **Acknowledge that God has allowed the situation for His divine purpose.** Whatever has happened isn't an accident, but a vital part of His plan for your life. **神有把聖潔的旨意在其中!**

■ **Thank the Lord in the midst of the situation.** Gratitude in everything is God's will for you according to 1 Thessalonians 5:18. When your heart is receptive, the Lord will show you blessings for which you can be thankful even in times of trouble or pain. **帖前五:18**

■ **Remember Romans 8:28.** "God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose."

■ **Recall the Lord's promises in 1 Peter 5:10.** "After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you." This is the good work He's purposed to do in your life through the trials you experience.

RESPONSE

■ Why is it so hard to let go of our desire to know why certain events happen to us? Do you think this displays a lack of trust in God? Why or why not?

■ The right response to trials is to immediately direct our thoughts toward God. Is this your first reaction? If so, what benefits have you discovered with this mindset? If not, what keeps you from focusing on the Lord? What can you do to shift your thoughts to Him?

■ What verses do you need to hide in your heart so that you will be armed with scriptural truth when pain or adversity comes your way?

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