

SERMON: SURVIVING THE THINGS YOU DREAD

JOB 3:25

JOB 42:12a

Job 3:25

For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me.

Job 42:12a

So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning.

Introduction

When one thinks of the Biblical character, Job, what mental image comes to mind? Well, that depends on where in the narrative you focus. Of course, we know he was a good guy. He also was a very rich guy at the beginning of the story. Then he became a guy who lost it all. At the end, he gained it all back and more. All of us are a Job or a Jobette at least one time in our lives. Like Job, all of us have endured innocent suffering and we could not figure out why.

Job was cautious to avoid certain unfortunate things especially in regards to his children. He taught them the way of the Lord and acted as the priest of his family. He prayed for them after each youthful social event just in case they acted ungodly. He always worked to show his wife respect and admiration. He was a successful business man, who was always just and fair in his transactions.

Job had “healthy fear.” Healthy fear is advantageous; irrational fear is debilitating. Healthy fear makes you stop at a stop sign and proceed only when it is safe or legal. Irrational fear will make you paranoid and you will not enjoy life or reach the destiny God has for you. There were certain conditions Job was intentionally avoiding for himself and his family. He knew actions and decisions had consequences. He wanted his children to be sanctified and successful. He wanted his business endeavors to be profitable without corruption or crookedness. He wanted his wife to respect him as the man of the house.

Like Job, despite our carefulness, there is still a part of us that makes us believe those dreadful, unthinkable things will not happen to us, personally. It always happens to the other guy. It only happens to the guy on the six o'clock news. It's a mental game of denial we play on ourselves to protect our ego and our sanity. There is a problem, however- this denial backfires every time and we are caught off guard and have difficulty processing reality. We see it constantly on the local news, where people cannot believe crime can occur in their “nice” neighborhood. This bicameral approach is just part of being human. That's the way our brains are wired.

Now let's get back to Job. All at once, all of the things he dreaded and sought to avoid hit him like a ton of bricks. His children were killed. His business assets were taken, his physical health failed and his body became unbearably painful, and his wife lost respect for him. (Now, I have to give his wife a whole lot of slack; she had just lost ten children, all at once. What mother could handle that calmly or rationally?)

This month as we heighten our awareness about breast cancer and the many other forms of cancer, we want to commend those who have kept the faith through your personal, dreadful ordeal. Like Job, that which you dreaded and sought to avoid came knocking on your front door. Let's face it; no one likes to hear the C-word, especially when it applies to yourself. Think about it! You survived-and even thrived. To God be the glory! Now you have a testimony that can help someone else. When there is no test, there is no testimony.

Whether it was intentional or intuitive, those who have survived breast cancer, the other types of cancer, and the many other severe medical conditions, have used and are using the principles I am presenting in this sermon. So, let's look at some of the principles of how to survive the things you dread.

Exposition

1. Refuse To Give Satan And Entrance Through The Door Of Trouble.

(Give No Place To The Devil-Ephesians 4:27.)

(This Applies Even When You Are Sick Or In Trouble That Is No Fault Of Yours.)

(Satan Enters Through Negative Thoughts.)

(Negative Thoughts Make You Bitter.)

(Negative Thoughts Lead To Negative Actions.)

2. Refuse To Allow Bad Conditions To Influence You To Make Bad Decisions.

(Peter Made Two Bad Decisions in a Bad Situation.)

(He Cut Off A Man's Ear & He Denied Jesus.)

3. Face Trouble With Prayer.

(When It Is Hard To Pray, Pray The Hardest.)

(Luke 18:1.)

4. Face Trouble With Praise and Thanksgiving.

(In Every Situation Give Thanks-1st Thessalonians 5:18.)

(Count Your Blessings.)

(Don't Surrender to Self-Pity and Despair.)

5. Remember God Is In Control.

(He Controls The Outcome.)

(He Influences The Results.)

(He Has Brought Us Too Far To Leave Us Now.)

(Romans 8:28.)

Closing Thoughts

Job did not have all of the answers, yet he trusted God. Faith is believing God when we don't have all of the answers. We may never get all of the answers on this side and when we get to the other side, we will be so happy until it will not matter. Faith is believing that the eternal values of God will never be destroyed. Faith is believing that nothing can separate us from the love of God- not cancer, nor any other disease.

An old preacher was asked what he regarded as the most comforting verse in the Bible. He answered, "And it came to pass." When told that was just the beginning of a verse, the preacher replied, "Still those are the most comforting words in the Bible to me. You see, it didn't come to stay-it came to pass, because trouble don't last always. God has the last word." God has the last word with cancer and every other disease. We have victory in Jesus, our Lord and Savior. Give God Glory! Give God All The Glory!

Related Scripture

James 5:11

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