

10-11-20

Sermon- Everybody Get Focused!

Scripture- Philippians 4:1-9, CTW- PS 19:8-14

Hymns- 59, 44, 621

Theme: Here Paul focuses on relational problems with the people of God. The two women in this story had been workers for Christ in the church. Their broken relationship was no small matter because many had become believers through their efforts. It is possible to have broken relationships, but Paul says we need to be reconciled when it comes to the work of the church in order to positively influence others.

I. Your Thought For the Day: Forget about what the news media is reporting, forget about what the popular opinion is right now on the internet and start to focus and call on the only opinion that really matters! Gods opinion!

A. Paul has a well-placed nugget of hope In this part of his letter.

As of this morning, there are billions of people all over the world, sitting around and thinking about a lot of things. Do I go out, do I stay in? Do I wear a mask? When is this all going to be over?

Will the economy rebound and what about the stock market? Am I going to be able to continue to work? When will all this end? When will things get back to **NORMAL**?

Do you all remember what God said in **2 Chronicles 7:14**? If My people will humble themselves and call upon my name I will hear from heaven, forgive their sins, and I will heal their land!

It's easy to read and hear that scripture and think ok Lord, get busy! But do we really believe that He will do so?

We already have the solution to the problem! There is strength in unity and what scripture says here is, to (show some humility)

realize this worldly circumstance is bigger than any of us, and we need to seek God.

And when we come together praying and seeking God, knowing only He has the ability to meet our need, His own words declare His willingness to help and heal the entire planet, where we live!

God is looking for righteous men and women all over this land to cast their faith and their hope in His amazing ability and trust Him to be the kind of God He promised He was!

B. Every story we find in the Bible... we find the common denominator of faith and hope! From the children of Israel to the message of the gospel and the resurrection Victory...

God has consistently delivered miracle after miracle in spite of how things appeared to be to the rest of the world.

Forget about what the news media is reporting, forget about what the popular opinion is right now on the internet and start to focus and call on the only opinion that really matters! Gods opinion!

II. I hear so many say we want to just get back to normal!

Is normal what we really want and are willing to settle for?

A. In reality, "Normal" is mediocrity. There is nowhere you will find that word in the scriptures! Gods abundant life and Gods blessings are never called normal!

For far too many people, normal and the desire for it has been a way of life! If you're a Christian God has called you out of obscurity...to live anything but a normal life! Yet far too many are doing exactly that!

We haven't been singing Jesus take the wheel, we have neglected the calling we all have been called to, to be salt and the light of Jesus to the world!

This crisis has come along and caught the majority of the church asleep at the wheel!

But that doesn't mean we can't unite together and call on His name and see salvation and healing take place in our land!

God has already given and equipped everyone with a measure of faith, (there is not one person who has not been equipped with Gods amazing faith gift) which is His spiritual defense mechanism with the ability, to put a thousand to flight!

Hey that reminds me, we just had Worldwide Communion Last Week, are you prepared to move mountains **YET!?**

Here's something to think about! Why is it when we're young, we're so willing try to test our abilities and are so willing to take tests of strength? You know what I'm talking about...the test designed to grade our ability to perform?

In fact we usually can't wait to compete and anxiously await each level of responsibility that life offers us. I remember from the time I turned 13 saying that I could not wait till I could drive a car! There are times nowadays that I wish I didn't have to!

Our Spiritual walk and relationship with God through Jesus our Savior should be no different.

It's time we got back to the basics of the faith, which caused every one of us to step out and trust our hearts to Jesus in the first place! It's time we fell in love again with the things of God!

B. One common characteristic tied to every level in everyone's spiritual walk is the fact that one time or another their measure of faith is going to be challenged!

That time has come for all of us! This is a world-wide challenge church!

The challenges from the accuser are always going to be daily, no matter what level of relationship they are at with God!

A lot of people when asked if they believe in God, almost always respond by saying yes. Very few are ever asked the follow up question of, "what have you done for God lately?"

Sadly, very few would be able to answer if asked, with something substantial or meaningful, they have ever done for God!

There has never been a greater time in history then right now, to call on the name of the Lord and stand in faith against the attack against humanity by Satan!

Look again at **Philippians 4:8,9** from today's passage:

8 And now, brothers, as I close this letter, let me say this one more thing: Fix your thoughts on what is true and good and right. Think about things that are pure and lovely, and dwell on the fine, good things in others. Think about all you can praise God for and be glad about. 9 Keep putting into practice all you learned from me and saw me doing, and the God of peace will be with you.

C. So the Question of the Day Becomes: Does what we are witnessing and all the mayhem we are seeing happening in real time around the world sound like anything we just read?

In **John 16:33**, Jesus puts it this way:

33 "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

Jesus has overcome the world and through Jesus and what He accomplished on the cross for us, we are also overcomers by the righteousness He has covered us with!

That is, if we are willing to activate our God given measure of faith and believe!

D. We weren't born to be self dependent or reliant! We came into this world quite the opposite! Our life was completely dependent on someone else for everything!

And thing is, we were 100% completely ok with depending on others for everything.

Our parents told us they loved us and expected us to trust them, and God's Word lovingly instructs us to do the same in our relationship with Him, through His Son Jesus.

But human nature and learned behavior continually raises the question of what to do with our desire to control our circumstances, with our own efforts! That is where we are in the midst of this crisis...it bothers us to not be in control!

However, God's Word instructs us to relax our grip on control, to trust in **His** immeasurable capabilities! We are supposed to let our self-effort "rest" in God's amazing love which He has for each and every one of us!

In Philippians 4:6,7 Paul reminds all of us:

"Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything; tell God your needs, and don't forget to thank him for his answers. 7 If you do this, you will experience God's peace, which is far more wonderful than the human mind can understand. His peace will keep your thoughts and your hearts quiet and at rest as you trust in Christ Jesus."

We are tempted to look at this and lament that it is easier said than done!"

III. If we want to receive the full benefit and blessing of what God wants to do in our lives, by faith we must follow his instructions and wait or rest for His perfect timing of deliverance!

A. To keep the faith, keep believing, resting in His most capable hands until God provides! When we do that, God is duty bound and held accountable to accomplish what we ask by His Word, which never fails!

Resting in the easiness of God's instruction is not easy! Because our human nature wants to impose degrees of difficulty, self-effort continually thinks it's labor can bring to the table!

Here's what God thinks and I'm inclined to think as well! We all deserve so much better than what we can bring to the table on our own.

Remember **Matthew 19:36**, "with man nothing is possible! With God all things are Possible!"

You see, God knows even on our best day, we're fortunate to be able to make it to the table, let alone bring something of value with us!

B. The last hurdle for all of us, before we see God work in our circumstance is resting in God's ability instead of our own!

The stories of Elijah, Joseph, David, Moses, Ruth, Esther and many others in Scripture, through their faith, gave God's people some well-placed nuggets of hope...that's why Scripture is such a great tool for living!

Today we have hope, because of God's gift of grace, delivered and administered by none other than His very own Son Jesus!

How much more are we blessed who know Jesus as Lord and Savior, who has become our hope, our qualification for every promise and blessing God wants to give us, including healing, safety and protection from all things, seen or not seen!

We have been called to use our hands, feet and voice to put into effect everywhere we can, the nuggets of hope Jesus offers to all!

We need to focus our energy of self-effort into relying on God's love, direction, and giving nature He has always had towards us!

Remember Matthew 19:26

²⁶Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

If you are willing to ask God, to help you level up and trust everything to His plans for your life, God will take you to levels

you never dreamed of and places you could've never imagined with His Goodness and Blessings leading you every step of the way!

Remember Matthew 11:28-30

28-30²⁸"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

IV. Let us all put away our desire of self-sufficiency and embrace the unforced rhythms of God's sweet grace and rest completely in the amazing plans God has for His children!

God is great enough to have plans of hope, plans for our welfare and our neighbor's welfare as well! There are amazing plans for the abundant future God has already created for us and the entire world we live in!

Remember that then you are willing to believe, God is able to deliver!

There will be amazing victories you cannot even imagine, indescribable destinations beyond belief, divine health and prosperity, all the glorious things Gods idea of abundant life has placed in your future and destiny!

This week go out of your way to be kind and help renew humanity's outlook and show the world Gods Love through your actions and ability to place nuggets of hope, in a world full of despair! Amen? Let us Pray...