

Sermon for FBC Sept. 10th, 2017

When Bad Happens, Go to God

Good morning!

This past two weeks we've looked at 'What Love Looks Like' and 'What God's Love Looks Like'.

Now I want to give you a little story from Charles Spurgeon talking about "God is Love."

One day, C.H. Spurgeon was walking through the English countryside with a friend. As they strolled along, the evangelist noticed a barn with a weather vane on its roof. At the top of the vane were these words: "God is Love." Spurgeon remarked to his companion that he thought this was a rather inappropriate place for such a message. "Weather vanes are changeable," he said, "But God's love is constant."

"I don't agree with you about those words, Charles," replied his friend. "You misunderstood the meaning. That sign is indicating a truth: Regardless of which way the wind blows, God is Love." ¹

When we face storms in our lives, we need to remember that God is Love! He will always love us and be in the storm with us.

Today we are looking at 'When Bad Happens, Go to God!'

Look around at our world today! There is so much bad happening out there that we are tempted to stay home and never go out. It is easy to get disheartened when we see and hear so much bad around us. Natural disasters, man-made destruction, society breakdown, family breakups and so much pain and suffering. People turn to anything that looks like it might help, and others find the easiest way out of living.

How do we survive this onslaught? What can we do to make it through the mess? Where do we turn? What can help? How do we cope? These questions are on our minds daily.

Will & Dorothy Rogers - Baptist Bible Fellowship International
(B.B.F.I.) Missionaries Letter to supporters September 1, 2017

"Sadly, the spiritual harvest is not as robust, though it is much more precious. Many of the people in the church here can remember better spiritual times for the area, but now in numerous communities, churches are closing or are without leadership. The land is falling under the sway of liberal social change, to the point where one teacher said that she faces a crisis of conscience over being forced to teach little children concerning 'gender-choices'.

But there is still a harvest! God is still working! God is still moving the parts together to gather souls! We believe that is what God is doing here."

'Survival to Revival' is a phrase I would like to put out to you. I have been watching all that is happening and wondering where God is going with us. What is His plan for our future?

I want to share a story from Kay Arthur in her article "In person: My Disappointments, His Appointments".

Kay was bitterly disappointed when she contracted a heart infection that forced her removal from the mission field. She and her family, serving in Mexico, were forced to return home. "I felt like a failure," she wrote. "Depression set in until I cried, 'Father, whatever you want.'"

"It would be several years before I'd see how He'd use those formative years of study in Mexico to prepare me to write inductive Bible studies that would eventually reach fifty-two countries."

"My disappointments aren't over," Kay admits. "Pain and trials are almost constant companions, but never enemies. They drive me into His sovereign arms. There He takes my disappointments and works everything together for good." ²

We can go to God in the midst of all this bad! God loves us and wants to walk with us throughout our lives. We need to be joyful that our God cares! We need to praise Him, seek Him and trust Him!

From the Old Testament people to the New Testament followers, God is the go-to guy!

Habakkuk 3:17-18

17 *Though the fig tree does not bud
and there are no grapes on the vines,
though the olive crop fails
and the fields produce no food,
though there are no sheep in the pen
and no cattle in the stalls,
18 yet I will rejoice in the Lord,
I will be joyful in God my Savior.*

Habakkuk had it right – life will always have its bad seasons but we can rejoice and be joyful through our faith in God.

James 4:7-10 NIV

7 *Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*
8 *Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.*
9 *Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom.*
10 *Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.*

How do we humble ourselves before God? First comes prayer – talking to God. We have to communicate with God to have a relationship with Him.

Ethel Barrymore is quoted: "When life knocks you to your knees – well, that's the best position in which to pray, isn't it?" ³

Karl Barth is quoted: "To clasp hands in prayer is the beginning of an uprising against the disorder in the world." ⁴

James told us to submit to God, resist the devil and God will lift us up. Can we begin to wage battle with the disorder of this world? Are we ready to make a stand for God in the tempest of this world?

Marilyn read the children a story “You are Special” by Max Lucado. It is about Wemmicks and how peer pressure affects us until we go to God and live in His presence and by His guidance. Then all the bad things that people say and do no longer can harm us or hold us down.

The part I liked the most is on pg. 29 where Eli is talking to Punchinello who asks why the stickers do not stay on the girl and Eli says: “Because she has decided that what I think is more important than what they think. The stickers only stick if you let them. The stickers only stick if they matter to you. The more you trust My love, the less you care about their stickers.”

Romans 8:31 NIV

31 What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

Philippians 4:13 NKJV

13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

I want to close with a little story that came from a friend by email and I do not know the author.

A visiting preacher was attending a men’s breakfast in Ohio farm County. He asked one of the impressive old farmers in attendance to say grace that morning. After all were seated, the older farmer began-----

“Lord, I hate buttermilk.”

The preacher opened one eye and wondered to himself where this was going.

Then the farmer loudly proclaimed, “Lord, I hate lard.”

Now the preacher was overly worried.

However, without missing a beat, the farmer prayed on, “And Lord, you know I don’t care much for raw white flour.”

Just as the preacher was ready to stand and stop everything, the farmer continued,

“But Lord, when you mix’em all together and bake’em up, I do love fresh biscuits. So Lord, when things come up we don’t like, when life gets hard, when we just don’t understand what you are sayin’ to us, we just need to relax and wait ‘till You are done mixin’, and probably it will be something even better than biscuits. Amen.”

When Bad Happens – Go to God! He will give you the power and joy to battle all the bad in this world. Let’s show the world God’s love!

¹Nelson’s Book of Stories, pg. 357

²Kay Arthur, pg. 30

³Nelson’s, pg. 622

⁴Nelson’s, pg. 628

Bibliography:

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