

Sermon notes for Sunday 20 of September

Thriving in the Midst of a Lockdown
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Main Scriptures:

Romans 8:18,19, 31, 32, 37

John 10:10

Philippians 4:8, 12-13

Romans 8:26-28

Colossians 3:1-4

2 Kings 7:1-20

Acts 16:22-31

- I. Introduction:
 - A. In the midst of this world-wide situation, we can know that the Lord is with us
 - B. This situation was not sent by God
 - C. In the middle of this “lockdown” situation, God can still work!
 - D. The Apostle Paul shows us what to do in the midst of a lockdown.
- II. Paul’s Lockdown
 - A. The Apostle Paul experienced many lockdowns in his life.
 - B. He was imprisoned for preaching the Gospel and it was not his fault.
 - C. Let’s see how he dealt with unexpected situations that came his way
 - D. Romans 8:18-19--*For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.*
 - E. Romans 8:31,32,37 --*What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? ...Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.*
 - F. Paul remembered that through Christ, he was more than victorious!
- III. Things we can learn from Paul’s Experience
 - A. God is for us
 1. John 10:10 -- *The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*
 2. We must remember that it is God who is on our side

B. Paul wrote Philippians while in prison

1. He encouraged us to keep our mindset on the eternal
2. Philippians 4:8 -- *Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.*
3. God's Word is His perspective
4. Philippians 4:12-13 -- *I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*
5. Paul had to learn how to go through times of adversity through the grace of God. He had tremendous victories and challenges. He would always remember his call
6. Paul placed his focus on his relationship with Jesus. (Philippians 3)

C. Paul understood how with the Holy Spirit's help, God would cause all things to work together for his good

1. Romans 8:26-28 -- *Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.*
2. Praying in the Spirit allows the Lord to work on our behalf because we pray according to His will. This is why praying in tongues is so important
3. Trust in the goodness of God!

D. Paul kept his mindset on the things of God

1. Colossians 3:1-4 -- *If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.*
2. Paul set his mind on the Kingdom of God
3. When we declare the Word of God, it affects how we think
4. When Paul was confined, he had to decide to think on what God says

5. He put an internal barrier that kept bitterness out

IV. Miracles Always Happen in the Midst of a Crisis

- A. The Red Sea was parted when the people of God were surrounded by the enemy army
- B. Provision came to the People of Israel when they had no food (manna)
- C. Jesus multiplied the loaves and fishes when the multitude had no means
- D. Miracles happen when there is a great need
- E. Many of us are facing great needs
- F. The same God who provided for his people in Scripture is the same God still works miracles today!
- G. Believe God! Expect a Miracle!
- H. Often, we do not know how the miracle will happen. Our job is to expect, believe and be open to instructions from Heaven
- I. 2 Kings 7:1-20
 - 1. The people were surrounded by the enemy and were in famine-- they were in a lockdown!
 - 2. God spoke to the prophet that in 24 hours, there would be a breakthrough!
 - 3. You do not have to be a pastor or prophet to hear from God! If you are a child of God, you can hear His voice. When you open up God's Word and make it a point to hear from His Spirit, you put yourself in a position to hear from God. He can speak through thoughts, ideas, etc.
 - 4. God used the most unlikely people (lepers) to bring about one of the greatest miracles recorded in Scripture.
 - 5. The prophet spoke of the economy being restored
 - 6. The lepers, the outcasts, went to the enemy's camp, and God caused their footsteps to sound like a mighty army
 - 7. God is telling some of us to take action, like the lepers, and the miracle will be manifested
 - 8. God made the enemy provide for the people of God!
 - 9. Even though we do not have an army surrounding our homes, the enemy is trying to place us under siege with fear.
 - 10. God wants to bring about miracles
- J. Acts 16:22-31
 - 1. Paul decided to praise in the midst of being in prison
 - 2. For some of us, the action for us to take might be to praise! Take the action the Lord is leading you to take
 - 3. Miracles affect those around us
 - 4. Expect something good!

V. Conclusion

- A. God is God of surprises!
- B. As you and I raise our expectation, praise, and pray in the Spirit, we can then be in position to cooperate with God to see breakthrough!
- C. Paul thrived in the midst of lockdowns by remembering God's love for him, that he was more than a conqueror, that he had the grace of God to go through circumstances well, that all things work together for good as he prayed in the Spirit, and that God is a God of miracles!
- D. You can be one idea away from breakthrough!
- E. Determine to raise your level of expectation by keeping your thoughts on Him, His Word and His Spirit