

Surviving the Storms of Life

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Have you ever known someone who was at their “wit’s end” with life? It seems that everything is going wrong. It seems that everything is against them and they feel like there is no hope.
 - 1. Consider the example of a young 18 year old girl. She has ran away from home. She is addicted to crack. To support her addiction, she has turned to prostitution. She is pregnant out of wedlock. She’s not even sure who the father of her baby is. She wants to quit. She wants to do better. But, she is so far down the whole that she feels as if there is no hope.
 - 2. Consider another example. This time the problems were not self-induced. When I was in high school, there was a local husband and wife who had four sons. One January or February morning, the four sons were going to school. They hit a patch of black ice and slid into an oncoming truck. All four sons were killed. Nearly a year later, the mourning mother and father lost their house to a great fire.
 - 3. Maybe you have made certain decisions which have wreaked havoc on your own life. Maybe you have been the victim of circumstances beyond your control. If so, then take some comfort in the thought that you are now alone. Others before you have faced such storms of life and have weathered those storms.
- B. The Bible is filled with people who faced great and terrible storms in their lives. At some point they crashed and burned. They hit rock bottom. However, in many of the cases, they realized that all was not lost. They fought through the problems, the traps, and the pitfalls and found life and hope.
- C. It is the purpose of this lesson to consider some Bible examples of people who weathered the storms of life. Some came out victorious. Some were destroyed in the great storms. You can be like those who came out victorious. To help you weather the storms of life, we will show you passages that can help guide you to spiritual safety.

I. THE PROBLEMS FACED BY OTHER PEOPLE.

- A. Adam and Eve were cast from the garden because of their sin. (Genesis 3:1-24) By Adam sin entered the world. (Romans 5:12-19)
- B. Cain killed his brother out of anger and jealousy. (Genesis 4:1-15) Cain had to live the rest of his life with the knowledge, guilt, and consequences of his sin.

- C. In the case of Job, completely out of his control, Job lost everything in his life except for his life and his wife. Job stayed faithful to God. He never gave up on God. (Job 1:1 - 2:10)
- D. Then there was Joseph, the son of Jacob. Joseph was the victim of hateful and jealous brothers. Joseph, being sold into slavery, found himself in Egypt working as a slave and then later as a prisoner. However, through all the storms, Joseph remained faithful to God. God gave Joseph victory over his problems. (Genesis 37, 39 - 47)
- E. Ruth and Naomi both suffered through the loss of their beloved husbands. In their greatest times of distress, they stuck together and remained faithful to God. In the end, God delivered Ruth and Naomi from their distress state to a state of contentment through Boaz. (Ruth)
- F. King David, a man after God's own heart fell and fell hard. If it can be said that a Bible character "crashed and burned," it most surely would be said of David. David committed adultery with Bathsheba and had her husband killed in battle. Finally, David repented and God forgave him. While David had to face the consequences of his deeds, he never turned away from God. A man full of guilt found forgiveness and rest in the arms of a forgiving and loving God. (2 Samuel 11:1 - 12:22)
- G. Solomon, the son of David did not learn the lesson of repentance. In his later years of life, Solomon was led astray by his many wives. He turned to idolatry. He turned to sin. Solomon seems to be an example of one who destroyed his own life and did nothing to repair it. (1 Kings 11:1-43)
- H. The women caught in adultery was guilty of sin. Yet, Jesus forgave her and told her to sin no more. (John 8.3-11)
- I. Consider the apostle Peter. Before the death of Jesus, Peter denied Jesus three times. (Luke 22:54-62) However, Peter repentantly wept and was forgiven. (Imagine for a moment being Peter and living with that terrible reality.) Consider Peter's change of heart. Nearly 50 days later, Peter was proclaiming before a great multitude that Jesus Christ is both Lord and Savior. (Acts 2)
- J. Like Peter, Judas Iscariot, betrayed the Lord. However, in the case of Judas, he allowed the guilt to consume. Where as Judas could have turned to the God forgiveness and compassion, he allowed the guilt to lead him away from God to a rope, by which he hung himself. (Matthew 26:47-56; 27:3-10)
- K. Paul had Christians put to death! Paul persecuted the church! Yet, when Paul turned to God, God accepted Paul with open arms and forgave him of all his past deeds. (Acts 22:3-5; 1 Timothy 1:15-16)

II. HOW DO YOU SURVIVE?

- A. Can you survive during the storms of life? Is it possible for everyone to be like Job or King David? Do we have to end up in despair and think that there is no way out as in the case of Judas Iscariot?
- B. You can survive. You can be victorious. Consider the following passages which can help strength your resolve.
 - 1. Psalms 37:5
 - 2. Psalms 55:22
 - 3. Proverbs 16:3
 - 4. Jeremiah 17:7-8
 - 5. Matthew 11:28-30
 - 6. Matthew 13:22
 - 7. Matthew 6:25-34
 - 8. Philippians 4:6-7
 - 9. Hebrews 13:5-6
 - 10. 1 Peter 5:6-9
 - 11. 1 John 1:8 - 2:2 - repent and ask for forgiveness
 - 12. Acts 26:20 - do works to change
- C. Keep this in mind:
 - 1. If you can do something about the problem you face, then have courage to act.
 - 2. If you can do absolutely nothing about the problems, then leave it in the hands of God and go about your life.
 - 3. Do not allow the problems of life to pull you away from serving God.

CONCLUSION.

- A. If your problem is sin, then begin today by asking for God's forgiveness and the strength to turn away and stay away. Bear whatever fruits of repentance that you must bear and God will grant the strength if you will use it.
- B. If you are facing problems with your life over which you have no control, then put the worrying upon the broad shoulders of God and concentrate solely upon serving him.
- C. There will always be consequences of sin and problems in life, however, the peace

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that passes all understanding (Philippians 4:7) comes through salvation in Jesus Christ and trust in the Father above.

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