

What We Need To Face The Future

October 29, 2020

Courage

Courage does not come from resources, strength, experience, knowledge (education), skills, endurance, nor a high threshold of pain.

Courage is knowing that in every trial there is a way of escape, and that escape is the companionship and presence of our Heavenly Father. Courage is knowing that your Heavenly Father will meet you inside of every trial.

Consider Daniel in the lion's den - Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the fiery furnace - Stephen being stoned - Paul being stoned and left for dead - they all had to go through instead of being delivered from, but there was for each of them a heavenly escape in the midst of the trial.

You will never find that heavenly escape by being delivered from, only by going through. There was a supernatural deliverance that Daniel found inside the lion's den, that he never would have found outside the lion's den! There was a supernatural miracle that Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego found inside the fiery furnace, that they would have never found outside.

1 Corinthians 10:13 ESV

13 No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

- overtaken (lambanō) to lay hold of, to remove, to take in order to carry away
- way of escape (ekbasis) an egress, way out

Psalm 23:4 ESV

4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

Deuteronomy 31:8 ESV [Moses speaking to Joshua before all Israel.]

8 It is the LORD who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed."

Isaiah 43:1-5 ESV

1 But now thus says the LORD, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine.

2 When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you.

3 For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. I give Egypt as your ransom, Cush and Seba in exchange for you.

4 Because you are precious in my eyes, and honored, and I love you, I give men in return for you, peoples in exchange for your life.

5 Fear not, for I am with you; I will bring your offspring from the east, and from the west I will gather you.

Isaiah 25:4-5 ESV

4 For you have been a stronghold to the poor, a stronghold to the needy in his distress, a shelter from the storm and a shade from the heat; for the breath of the ruthless is like a storm against a wall,

5 like heat in a dry place. You subdue the noise of the foreigners; as heat by the shade of a cloud, so the song of the ruthless is put down.

Joy

Even if there is nothing in this life that brings joy, there is enough joy in the goodness and love of God to last all eternity! Just the joy of your sins being forgiven and your soul spared from Hell is more than enough joy to last a lifetime!

Joy is never dependent upon the circumstances. Joy gives you the strength to stand and endure through the worst of circumstances. Joy has an unseen and eternal source - the person and presence of God!

There is an unbreakable link between joy and strength. If you have joy, you have strength. If you have joy, you have incentive and initiative. If you have joy, you have the energy and hope to continue on through the worst of times. Without joy, you have nothing. Without joy, you have no reason to hope and no strength to continue.

Habakkuk 3:17-19 ESV

17 Though the fig tree should not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls,

18 yet I will rejoice in the LORD; I will take joy in the God of my salvation.

19 GOD, the Lord, is my strength; he makes my feet like the deer's; he makes me tread on my high places.

Philippians 4:4 ESV

4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice.

Psalms 43:4-5 ESV

4 Then I will go to the altar of God, to God my exceeding joy, and I will praise you with the lyre, O God, my God.

5 Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God.

Psalms 16:11 ESV

11 You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

Psalms 28:6-9 ESV

6 Blessed be the LORD! For he has heard the voice of my pleas for mercy.

7 The LORD is my strength and my shield; in him my heart trusts, and I am helped; my heart exults, and with my song I give thanks to him.

8 The LORD is the strength of his people; he is the saving refuge of his anointed.

9 Oh, save your people and bless your heritage! Be their shepherd and carry them forever.

Nehemiah 8:10 ESV

10 ...the joy of the LORD is your strength.

1 Samuel 30:1-6 ESV

1 Now when David and his men came to Ziklag on the third day, the Amalekites had made a raid against the Negeb and against Ziklag. They had overcome Ziklag and burned it with fire

2 and taken captive the women and all who were in it, both small and great. They killed no one, but carried them off and went their way.

3 And when David and his men came to the city, they found it burned with fire, and their wives and sons and daughters taken captive.

4 Then David and the people who were with him raised their voices and wept until they had no more strength to weep.

5 David's two wives also had been taken captive, Ahinoam of Jezreel and Abigail the widow of Nabal of Carmel.

6 And David was greatly distressed, for the people spoke of stoning him, because all the people were bitter in soul, each for his sons and daughters. But David strengthened himself in the LORD his God.

Contentment

Contentment is being satisfied, fulfilled, self-sufficient, finding everything we need, in Jesus.

Contentment is when your character, your demeanor, your attitude, your purpose, your responses, remain unchanged no matter what you are experiencing or facing - "independent of external circumstances." You remain the same through good or bad, joy or sorrow, strength or weakness, wealth or poverty, health or sickness, fullness or hunger.

Do you get grouchy when you're tired? Do you get irritable when you're hungry? Do you get defensive when questioned? Are you defeated when overwhelmed? Do you give up when opposed? Are you angry when someone else gets the attention or praise?

Do you react under pressure, or is your composure and conduct unchanged? This is the true test of your contentment.

Philippians 4:11-13 ESV

11 Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content.

- **content** (autarkēs) *self-sufficient, strong enough or possessing enough to need no aid or support, independent of external circumstances, contented with one's lot or means though the slenderest*

Philippians 4:11-13 ESV

12 I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need.

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

Philippians 4:5 ESV

5 Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand.

- **reasonableness** (epieikēs) *appropriate, mild, gently, moderation, patient*