

Group Resource

Sermon Notes – Sunday, October 19, 2014

Series: Navigating through the ups and downs of real.life

Message: The Lord Can Give You Much More Than That

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 25:5-9

- I. In Part 2 of the #notmyrace message, we recall the words of the Hebrew writer that instruct us to (1) throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, (2) run with perseverance the race marked out for us, by (3) fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. (Hebrews 12:1-2)
 - a. To succeed in running our race, we have to throw off the weights that hinder us. Two vital areas of hindrance are: comparison/competition and covetousness.
- II. In the kingdom of God, more is not always better!
 - a. Western culture extols the virtue of maximizing. We try to supersize our meals, maximize the food we eat at buffets, etc. Sometimes, by God's prerogative, He chooses to provide us with less and remove things or people from our lives so that we know that all power comes from God and God alone.
 - b. For example, Gideon, in **Judges 7:2**: "The Lord said to Gideon, "You have too many men. I cannot deliver Midian into their hands, or Israel would boast against me, 'My own strength has saved me.'"
- III. In 2 Chronicles 24-25, Judah learned that more is not a guarantee of victory nor is it always better.
 - a. Amaziah was the ninth king of Judah. God had called him to fight against the Edomites.
 - b. From within Judah, Amaziah was able to recruit over 300,000 men fit for military service, able to handle the spear and shield." (**2 Chronicles 25:5**)
 - c. But Amaziah made a crucial decision in Verse 6: *He also hired a hundred thousand fighting men from Israel for a hundred talents of silver.*
 - d. The Lord sent a prophet to instruct Amaziah on the shortcomings of his choice. 2 Chronicles 25:7 *But a man of God came to him and said, "Your Majesty, these troops from Israel must not march with you, for the Lord is not with Israel—not with any of the people of Ephraim. **8 Even if you go and fight courageously in battle, God will overthrow you before the enemy, for God has the power to help or to overthrow.**"*
 - e. God utilizes all of the parts of the body of Christ in order to help us walk in his ways and statutes. We should pay attention to those who God sends in our lives to help correct our course and get us back on track.
 - i. **Proverbs 19:20** Listen to advice and accept instruction, and in the end you will be wise.
Proverbs 1:5 A wise man will hear and increase in learning, And a man of understanding will acquire wise counsel.
 - f. The prophet extolled the sovereignty of God: "For God has the power to help or to overthrow." When God helps, he is always victorious! When God overthrows, he is always victorious! This is reminiscent of the words of the Apostle Paul in **Romans 8:31**: If God is for us, who can be against us?
- IV. If God has this much power – what causes us to forsake his leading and pursue our own ideals? Covetousness!

V. **1 - What is covetousness and why do we need to guard against it?**

- a. The 10th Commandment is Do not covet: EXODUS 20:17 "You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor."
 - i. To covet is to have an ***Inordinate desire or greediness to possess what belongs exclusively to another***
 - ii. We can covet:
 1. The possessions of another,
 2. The position or power of another, or
 3. The exclusive relationship or life of another
 - iii. Coveting elevates something or someone above God. It goes directly against one of God's greatest provisions: grace. "His grace is sufficient for us!"
 - iv. Coveting is addictive! Coveting leads to stealing, defilement and adultery.

VI. **2 – How do we walk in victory and guard against covetousness?**

- a. God's designed believers to conquer through hardship, persecution, famine, and danger.
 - i. **Romans 8:35, 37:** Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ... 37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.
- b. We tend to walk in covetousness when we don't realize that God has given us everything that we need in order to be a conqueror.
 - i. **2 Peter 1:3:** By his divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. We have received all of this by coming to know him, the one who called us to himself by means of his marvelous glory and excellence.
- c. We should meditate on these three things in order to resist the temptation of coveting.
 - i. Know OUR corporate and individual identity in Christ. Each of us is uniquely created by God. (John 1:12)
 - ii. Know OUR race and how to run it.
 - iii. Know OUR triggers for discontentment
 1. Paul says in **Philippians 4:11-13** *I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. 12 I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. 13 I can do all this through him who gives me strength.*

VII. **3 – How do we distinguish between coveting and healthy ambition?**

- a. Examine whether our desire is a legitimate desire? Does it pass the **Philippians 2:8** test? Is it true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent and praiseworthy?
- b. Will the desire violate our current responsibilities/covenants? [ex. Singleness, marriage, family commitments]
- c. Am I excessively desiring this thing at the expense of my relationship with God?

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Let's Talk Notes – Sunday, October 19, 2014

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- 1) Imagine that you have the opportunity to design your own food buffet. What 5 items would you most like to have?
- 2) As you reflect back on last weekend's sermon, what one principle or insight stands out as being particularly helpful, insightful or difficult to grasp?
- 3) **Read** Joshua 7:19-21. What was Achan's sin? What are some of your 'If I just have this' statements? Have you tested whether they are healthy ambitions or covetous desires? If you are comfortable, share an experience with the group in which you realized that you were coveting something or someone that belonged exclusively to another. What did you learn about yourself through the experience?
- 4) Pastor Joseph reminded us that more (quantity) is not always better in the kingdom of God. How does covetousness lead us to want more at the expense of our relationship with God? What are other dangers of coveting?
- 5) Read **2 Peter 1:3**. What does it mean that God has given us everything that we need? How does knowing YOUR corporate and individual identity help you to realize what God has provided to you.
 - a. Turn and talk to your neighbor about your testimony. This can include how you came to salvation or important lessons you've learned in your Christian journey. Talk with him or her about how your testimony shapes your identity in Christ and how you fit into the body of Christ.
- 6) What are possible things or circumstances that can trigger discontentment? Are you more susceptible to a particular trigger for discontentment? How can you guard against covetousness when you feel discontent?
- 7) Share your #notmyrace testimony. Today, I could _____, but that's #notmyrace! We are learning to throw off everything that hinders our race! Hebrews 12:1-3.