

Group Resource

Sermon Notes – Sunday, June 7, 2015

Series: The Courage to Continue

Scripture: Exodus 6:1-8

Message: When Purpose Collides With Opposition

- I. In this series, Pastor Joseph addresses key issues that hinder us from walking in courage.
 - a. What do you do when obeying God seems to cost more than doing it your own way?
 - b. What do you do when your circumstances become harder after you have obeyed God?
- II. Scientists have identified that human nature creates a physiological response to a perceived harmful event, attack, or threat to survival. Each of us tend to lean towards fighting or fleeing when there is opposition, whether real or perceived.
- III. While the human body physically responds to opposition, our spiritual man is called to have a faith response whenever there is opposition, as well.
- IV. Our Godly nature calls us to walk with endurance
 - a. Endurance is the ability to persevere in a task or calling.
 - b. Endurance doesn't mean doing the exact same thing, in the exact same way over and over again, but that we continue to press on towards our goal/purpose.
 - i. For followers of Christ – endurance starts with knowing our purpose in Christ Jesus and then living according to that purpose no matter what challenges may come our way. (Colossians 1:10-11)
 - c. The Scriptures remind us of our call to endure.
 - i. **1 Corinthians 15:58** Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.
 - ii. **Galatians 6:9** Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.
 - iii. **2 Corinthians 4:8** We are pressed on every side by troubles, but we are not crushed. We are perplexed, but not driven to despair. 9 We are hunted down, but never abandoned by God. We get knocked down, but we are not destroyed.
 - d. When we encounter difficulty, we are instructed to not throw in the towel but to have the courage to continue in the will of God.
 - i. **HEBREWS 10:35** So do not throw away this confident trust in the Lord. Remember the great reward it brings you! ³⁶ Patient endurance is what you need now, so that you will continue to do God's will. Then you will receive all that he has promised. ³⁹ But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved.
- V. The Lord gave Moses the courage to continue in his call to deliver the children of Israel from Pharaoh's hands
 - a. In Exodus 4, Moses gained confidence that the Lord equipped him to be able to lead the people.
 - b. In the beginning of Chapter 5, Moses and Aaron go to Pharaoh but the results were not what they expected.
 - i. Exodus 5:1 After this presentation to Israel's leaders, Moses and Aaron went and spoke to Pharaoh. They told him, "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: Let my people go so they may hold a festival in my honor in the wilderness." ² "Is that so?" retorted Pharaoh. "And who is the LORD? Why should I listen to him and let Israel go? I don't know the LORD, and I will not let Israel go."
 - c. Obedience begets difficulty
 - i. We must develop a comprehensive theology to evaluate our circumstances. Generally, when we are doing the will of God – we tend to experience more opposition – especially amongst those who do not know the Lord. However, opposition doesn't guarantee that we are in the

will of God. Sometimes opposition comes as a result of poor choices or being outside of the will of God (1 Peter 2:19-20)

- ii. In Moses' dilemma, being in the center of God's will still brought severe opposition.
 - 1. *EXODUS 5:6* *That same day Pharaoh sent this order to the Egyptian slave drivers and the Israelite foremen: ⁷ "Do not supply any more straw for making bricks. Make the people get it themselves! ⁸ But still require them to make the same number of bricks as before. Don't reduce the quota. They are lazy. That's why they are crying out, 'Let us go and offer sacrifices to our God.' ⁹ Load them down with more work. Make them sweat! That will teach them to listen to lies!"*
- d. Not only did Moses experience rejection, but it caused his own people to rebel against him. The Israelite foreman confronted Moses and Aaron and said to them, "May the LORD judge and punish you for making us stink before Pharaoh and his officials. You have put a sword into their hands, an excuse to kill us!" (Exodus 5:21)
- e. These circumstances led Moses to question the Lord's calling. ²² Then Moses went back to the LORD and protested, "Why have you brought all this trouble on your own people, Lord? Why did you send me? ²³ Ever since I came to Pharaoh as your spokesman, he has been even more brutal to your people. And you have done nothing to rescue them!" (Exodus 5:22-23)

VI. The Lord's Answer to Moses' difficulty

- a. God is stronger than any difficulty.
 - i. **Exodus 6:1** Then the LORD told Moses, "Now you will see what I will do to Pharaoh. When he feels the force of my strong hand, he will let the people go. In fact, he will force them to leave his land!"
 - ii. God reminded Moses that despite Pharaoh's stubbornness, God was still in control of his purpose. We cannot allow our circumstances to dilute God's strength and ability.
- b. God allows our purpose to collide with opposition so that that we can know Him more intimately.
 - i. Exodus 6:2 And God said to Moses, "I am Yahweh—'the LORD.' ³ I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob as El-Shaddai—'God Almighty'—but I did not reveal my name, Yahweh, to them... ⁵ I am well aware of my covenant with them.
 - ii. The patriarchs had experienced the "El-Shaddai" nature of God – the almighty provider.
 - iii. Through this place of difficulty, God was teaching Moses that He is Yahweh – the "I AM that I AM" promise keeper.
- c. The courage to continue doing the will of God rests on the strength of our faith in God's ability!
 - i. **Exodus 6:6-8** ⁶ "Therefore, say to the people of Israel: 'I am the LORD. I will free you from your oppression and will rescue you from your slavery in Egypt. I will redeem you with a powerful arm and great acts of judgment. ⁷ I will claim you as my own people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God who has freed you from your oppression in Egypt. ⁸ I will bring you into the land I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. I will give it to you as your very own possession. I am the LORD!"
 - ii. When Moses encountered difficulty, God's solution wasn't to teach Moses how to have more self-esteem. Instead, God taught Moses how to have more faith (God-esteem). Over 10 times, the Lord reminds Moses of what He would do: "I am the Lord... I will free you..."
 - iii. When we know our purpose here on this earth, we can rest in knowing that God will lead us to accomplish that purpose, even if God takes us through difficult seasons in order to get there.
 - iv. In fact, God had already instructed Moses that He was going to harden Pharaoh's heart but don't lose heart, God's perfect will would prevail (Exodus 4:21)
 - v. We must always remember God's promises and direction.

Group Resource

Let's Talk Notes – Sunday, June 7, 2015**Series:** The Courage to Continue**Scripture:** Exodus 6:1-8**Message:** When Purpose Collides With Opposition

1. Scientists have identified that human nature tends towards to lean towards fighting or fleeing when there is opposition. Where would you put yourself on this spectrum? Is your reaction different when it comes to spiritual matters and trusting God?
2. As you reflect back on this weekend's sermon, what one principle or insight stands out as being particularly helpful, insightful or difficult to grasp? Were you challenged in any area of your personal walk with God?
3. **Read** Hebrews 10:35. The writer identifies that believers need patient endurance in order to continue doing God's will. What are ways that we can exhibit patient endurance in our trials? What does impatient endurance look like? According to Hebrews 10:36, what is the benefit of walking in patient endurance?
4. **Read** Exodus 5:22-23. How did Moses respond to the opposition from Pharaoh and his own people? Was it fair for Moses to protest that God had "done nothing to rescue them." In what ways was Moses' perspective correct? In what ways was his perspective incorrect? How should we approach God when it seems that our obedience causes more opposition?
Example: The cries of our heart, the conditions that we face, and the wisdom to deal with the conditions
5. In response to Moses' protest, God told Moses to put aside his broken spirit and feelings of inadequacy and return to the people. God affirmed that He was actively involved in bringing about the deliverance of the children of Israel. **Read** Matthew 11:28. Why should we bring our petitions to God rather than carrying them by ourselves?
6. Are there any areas of your life that God is challenging you to not shrink back? What can you do to strengthen your faith so that you have the courage to continue?