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Keeping the Faith in a Crisis; Job 1
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Introduction – I am preaching this message today because what we have experienced in recent days feels much like a crisis, both in our community and in our culture. In our community, we have experienced a dramatic spike in Covid cases. The virus has now impacted our church family in a variety of ways, some troubling and some tragic. Hospitals are at capacity. It seems like a crisis.

Our culture also seems to be at a critical point. When you combine a cancel culture with the violence of a mob mentality, it only leads to chaos and further division. We are quickly headed towards a very critical cultural climate.

Therefore, there is a lot of panic and fear and worry present. There is also a lot of anger and confusion and blaming and broad, sweeping accusations floating from all sides. People are frustrated and worried. Which is what happens when you are in a crisis. It is therefore absolutely essential that we as believers look to the Word of God and find direction for how to live and believe and keep the faith during a crisis. We cannot face the issues of our day with panic or anger. We believe we live in a world governed by a sovereign God, who is merciful and just, panic and anger are not our response. So how do we keep the faith during a crisis?

- I. We Must Be Prepared to Face the Crisis (vv1-5)
 - a. Job was one of the wealthiest men in all of the Bible. Thousands of livestock and very many servants. He was the billionaire of his day. “so that this man was the greatest of all the people of the east.” But it wasn’t his wealth that prepared him for his crisis. In fact all of his wealth will be of no assistance to him in this crisis because he will lose it all. Fortune will fail you in a crisis. Money and possessions will not suffice when your world turns upside down.
 - b. Job was a blessed. He had 10 children. The Bible says children are a gift from God. Job was a blessed man. But take note, the material, temporal blessings of God, even the greatest ones like children, will not carry you through a crisis. That’s not their purpose. Blessings are given that we might bless others and praise God. They are not given

to sustain us. They are given to remind us how good God is. Job's blessings didn't prepare him for his crisis; he lost them too.

- c. So what did prepare Job for the crisis he endured? (1) v1. He walked closely with God.
 - i. Blameless – describes his reputation. No one could find any fault with Job in how he treated people and conducted business. He was blameless.
 - ii. Upright – He did what was right. He lived rightly. He didn't undermine or cheat or lie or mistreat. His character was honorable with integrity.
 - iii. Feared God – he lived his life in order to please the Lord
 - iv. Turned away from evil – Job did the right things and avoided the wrong, sinful things.
 - v. Job was prepared to endure an unbelievable crisis because he walked closely with God. In his heart, he honored the Lord, and in his reputation he was exemplary. He loved God and others.
 - vi. Which leads us to our first question of self-examination this morning? Are we ready for a crisis? Are we walking with God?
- d. By extension, Job's walk with God was demonstrated in that his first and foremost concern for his children was their relation to God. He wasn't concerned whether or not they would live a luxurious life? He wasn't doing everything he could to make sure they succeed in the world or make it big. He was concerned that they were right with God. The Bible says, "Thus Job did continually."
 - i. As parents we have a second question of self-examination. What is our first and foremost concern for our children? To what do we give the most energy and time and resources and concern? What are we continually doing on their behalf?
- e. Job was prepared for crisis. Are we?

II. Don't Forget the Spiritual Realm (vv6-12)

- a. As readers of the book of Job, we are privy to this cosmic conversation, but the man Job, in real time, has no idea about this conversation. He has no idea what is taking place in the spiritual realm. Job does not know there is a great cosmic contest playing out in real time in his life. And the question on the table is: God, are you enough? If you strip everything away from Job, will you be enough?

Job has no idea in his suffering and pain that he will forever testify to the world that no matter what crisis you face – God is enough!

- b. We are in the same situation as Job. The spiritual realm overlaps our natural realm but is invisible to us. However, because God in His Word, often pulls back the curtain and gives us a glimpse into the spiritual realm we have these great truths to hang on to when facing our own crisis. Here are 3 lessons as we peer into the invisible in ch1.
- c. First, we must remember as the narrative of our crisis unfolds before us, there is a higher narrative taking place and God is its chief architect. God is in control, even in times of crisis. Even when it seems God is nowhere to be found. Even when it feels as though God has forgotten or forsaken us. He has not! There is a higher, greater plan unfolding, one which we don't yet see but is there none the less.
 - i. When we react based solely on what we see and forget what is unseen, we will often respond to God in doubt and anger, forgetting that God is working all things together for the good of those who love Him.
- d. Second, because God is in control and therefore there is a higher plan being carried out, we can rest assured that nothing occurs in this life that has not passed through the permissive hand of God.
 - i. What causes Job's crisis in the following verses? We could say the direct cause is murderers, thieves, and a strong wind. Due to the actions of evil people and the force of a great wind, Job experiences tremendous suffering. These people are responsible for what they have done and the collapse of this house is explained by a great wind. Direct causes.
 - ii. But there is also the indirect cause of Satan himself. He puts it into the minds of these evil people to act out their evil, and being evil, they are quick to acquiesce to Satan's ploys. Satan, called in Scripture, the prince of the power of the air, sends this great wind whirling down on this house.
 - 1. We need to be reminded of this especially in our day when division on moral issues has never been greater. We may debate and disagree but we don't hate or resort to violence. We are to love and pray for and seek to win those who disagree or despise us.

2. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.
 3. Our calling is not to win elections. Our calling is to win souls! People are perishing. Physically perishing from a virus and spiritually perishing from deception and delusion. Rescue the perishing. Care for the dying. Jesus is merciful. Jesus will save.
 - iii. But let us also be mindful that above the direct causes and indirect causes, there is the sovereign, permissive will of the Lord. Nothing happens outside of God's sovereign hand. As difficult a pill as that is to swallow in difficult times, we really would not want to live in a world where God is not ultimately in control.
 - e. Third, God has Satan on a leash and he can't move one inch beyond where God allows him to move.
- III. Every Crisis is Difficult But Every Crisis is not the Same (vv13-19)
- a. Covid has caused great suffering and the downward moral trend of our culture will inevitably produce suffering. A crisis is a crisis, especially when you are in the middle of it.
 - b. But at the same time, we always have reason to hope and rejoice and be thankful. Those who have gone before us have endured much worse and many of our brothers and sisters around the world today endure unspeakable horrors. We have not lost everything yet, as Job did. And in ch2, he loses even more, his health and the support of his wife and eventually his own friends heap condemnation on him rather than comfort.
 - c. As bad as it seems, God is still merciful and it could be worse. We can at least be thankful for the restraining hand of God. He doesn't allow evil to run amuck and unchecked.
- IV. Worship the God who is Sovereign and Trust that He is working all things for His glory and our good. (vv20-22)

- a. So what did Job do when he lost everything in a matter of minutes and had no idea that God was at work doing something beyond his imagination? First, he grieved with all his might.
- b. Second, he worshipped. He worshipped the sovereignty of God. He recognized that everything he had came from the hand of God. It was God's to give and it was God's to take. He worshipped the sovereignty of God.
- c. But he also trusted that God was not being neglectful or harmful towards him. Blessed be the name of the Lord. In fact, Job believed that what he could not yet see was more true than ever. Job 19:25-27.
- d. In our own crisis, we may be brought to tears. We may grieve. But we can survive and endure any crisis if we worship and trust.

Conclusion – For all of Job's questions and doubts and suffering and loss, in the end, God doesn't answer Job's questions, He doesn't explain why. He rather does something better than answer Job's questions. He reveals Himself to Job. And once Job sees the greatness and glory of God, his conclusion is that God is enough. He didn't need answers anymore. God was enough.

Let us pray that through the crisis in our community and in our culture, God may show us more of Himself, more of His greatness and glory, and we may testify with Job – God is enough!