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THE BEREANS


ACTS 17:11

2 Timothy 2:8-13
Lesson #27
Persevering in Faith
10/29/2023

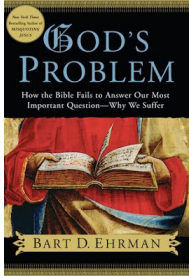
1

How can we trust God when our expectations, based on Biblical promises, are not met?

“I just began to lose it.
It wasn't for lack of trying.
But I just couldn't believe
there was a God in charge
of this mess.”



“How the Bible Fails to Answer Our Most Important Question – Why we Suffer?”



2


Malachi 3:10

“Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and **test Me now in this**,” says the Lord of hosts, “if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows.”

**God invite us to test Him
to verify His goodness?**

*Some people who have taken
God up on that challenge
have been left confused,
or have left the faith.*

**Could this have been
for lack of faith?**



3

**After sighting a long list of those who had their
faith rewarded with blessings, we are told this:**

Hebrews 11

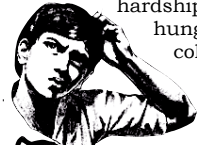
“³⁶ and others experienced mockings and scourgings, yes, also chains and imprisonment. ³⁷ They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were put to death with the sword; they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated ³⁸ (men of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in deserts and mountains and caves and holes in the ground.

³⁹ And all these, having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised,”

4

2 Corinthians 11

“²³ **Are they servants of Christ?** (I speak as if insane) **I more so**; in far more labors, in far more imprisonments, beaten times without number, often in danger of death. ²⁴ Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine lashes. ²⁵ Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep. ²⁶ I have been on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren; ²⁷ I have been in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. ²⁸ Apart from such external things, there is the daily pressure upon me of concern for all the churches.”



5

**Expectations are the arena of both
hope and despair.**

**Satan does not want to
take away our faith,
hope, and love.**

**He just wants
to dictate the
object and subject
of our faith, hope & love.**



6

**The context
in which Paul is writing 1&2 Timothy**

- The Biblical promises that the Messiah (son of David) would deliver God's people from their suffering led to **expectations** that Christians would be free from suffering.
- **BUT** when this was not their **experience** many Christians were questioning, redacting, and even rejecting the faith.



Paul confirmed their experience and yet defended the faith.

BUT HOW?

7

Faith in the face of suffering

2 Timothy 2

“8 Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, descendant of David, according to my gospel, 9 for which I suffer hardship even to imprisonment as a criminal; but the word of God is not imprisoned. 10 For this reason I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory.

11 It is a trustworthy statement: For if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him; 12 If we endure, we shall also reign with Him; If we deny Him, He also will deny us; 13 If we are faithless, He remains faithful; for He cannot deny Himself.”

8

2 Timothy 2

“8 Remember Jesus Christ, **risen from the dead, descendant of David**, according to my gospel,”

- Paul's Messiah was linked to “King David” and the **expectation of power and glory**.
- **But the mention of Christ's “resurrection” suggests that Paul understands that the hope of the Gospel is not in this life.**

Ephesians 3:3-5

“that by revelation there was made known to me the **mystery**,...which **in other generations was not made known** to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit;”

9

Old Covenant and the New

The (Old) Mosaic Covenant was set aside for a **New Covenant**.

John 1:17

“For the **Law** was given through **Moses**; **grace** and truth were realized through **Jesus Christ**.”

10

The full meaning of this would come with the gift of the Spirit at Pentecost.

John 16:13

“But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, **He will guide you into all the truth**; . . . and He will disclose to you what is to come.”

The nation Israel



The Body of Christ



Old Testament - Gospels

Acts - Epistles

11

This was understood to be a new beginning.

Acts 11:15

“And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as He did upon us **at the beginning**.”

The nation Israel



The Body of Christ



Old Testament - Gospels

Acts - Epistles

12

2 Timothy 2

“9 for which I suffer hardship even to imprisonment as a criminal; but the word of God is not imprisoned. 10 For this reason I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory.”

- Paul did not see his **suffering as inconsistent with the Gospel** the apostles were preaching.

1 Peter 4

“12 Beloved, **do not be surprised** at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though *something* strange were happening to you; 13 but to the degree that you **share the sufferings of Christ**, keep on rejoicing, so that at the revelation of His glory you may also rejoice and be overjoyed.”

13

2 Timothy 2

“11 It is a trustworthy statement: For if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him; 12 If we endure, we shall also reign with Him; If we deny Him, He also will deny us; 13 If we are faithless, He remains faithful; for He cannot deny Himself.”

Rules of engagement for kingdom living as broken people in a broken world.

- Take our **baptism** seriously where we share in both **Christ’s death and resurrection**.
- Take our **alien status** seriously where we **walk by faith, not sight**.
- Take **abiding faith** seriously where his power is available only to those who have faith.

14

Interpretive paraphrase

2 Timothy 2

“Our present humiliation may seem inconsistent with a Davidic Messiah, but remember that Messiah Jesus was raised from the dead. We, like Jesus, may seem to be discarded but our hope is not about the reform of this world but about redemption and resurrection. I model this Gospel so that God’s people will not miss this point. You can count on these facts: 1) Sharing in Christ’s life is sharing in his death and suffering. 2) Kingdom living means walking by faith not sight. 3) If we want to share in his power and presence, we need to abide in him. We may be fickle, but he is not.”

15

Rules of engagement for kingdom living as broken people in a broken world.

- 1. Take our New Covenant **hope** seriously.

1 Corinthians 15

“17 and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins. 18 Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. 19 **If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied.**”

Spiritual audit

- Do we really realize the **power of our witness** in our response to life’s ups and downs?
- Welcome **trials as opportunities**.

16

1 Cor. 13:4-7 Love is a response to

patient	trials	Our witness is not in our worldly circumstances so much as our response to them.
kind	insults	
not jealous	success of others	
does not brag	success of self	
is not arrogant	power & authority	
not unbecoming	freedom	
not self seeking	competition	
is not provoked	confrontation	
holds no grudges	injustice	
does not rejoice	failure of others	
rejoices in the truth	gossip & slander	
bears all things	losses	
believes/hopes all things	discouragement	
endures all things	delayed hopes	

17

Do natural disasters show the acts of a sovereign God or call for the acts of a compassionate God?

God’s providential acts may be unclear, but His call for our response to them is very clear.

18

Rules of engagement for kingdom living as broken people in a broken world.

2. Take our baptism seriously - we die and are raised with Jesus.

Romans 12

"1 I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to **present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice**, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. 2 And do **not be conformed to this world**, but be transformed by the **renewing of your mind**, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."

Spiritual audit

- Which **spiritual OS** are you working under?
- Activate your baptismal covenant and **live by it.**

19

Baptism points us in the right direction and makes it easier to stay on the path if we take our baptism seriously.

When our goals, values, and priorities are clear it is easier to make godly decisions.



20

Rules of engagement for kingdom living as broken people in a broken world.

3. Take our alien status seriously - walk by faith not sight.

1 Corinthians 15

"17 and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins. 18 Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. 19 **If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied.**"

Spiritual audit

- If you want to make America Great, don't settle for the American dream - **aim higher.**
- Do we respect the **power of our witness** in our response to life's ups and downs?

21

Christians are Aliens even in America, which is not God's embassy on earth.



1 Peter 2:11

"I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul."



22

Rules of engagement for kingdom living as broken people in a broken world.

4. Take abiding faith seriously - he will be there for us and help us, but only as we have faith.

2 Corinthians 1

"8 For we do not want you to be unaware, brethren, of our affliction which came to us in Asia, that we were burdened excessively, beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of life; 9 indeed, we had the sentence of death within ourselves **in order that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead;**"

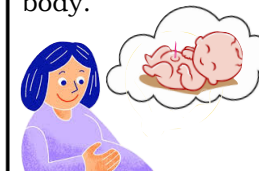
Spiritual audit

- What do you **pray that God will change?**
- Walk in Christ's Spirit who **anoints us to hope in the resurrection and to respond to trials.**

23

Romans 8

"22 For we know that the whole creation groans and **suffers the pains of childbirth** together until now. 23 And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body."



What do the "pains of childbirth" tell us about suffering and hope?

24

Not being able to sleep can be aggravating.



Except when you are a 6 year old child on the night before Christmas.

25

“We shine when the fire inside us burns brighter

than the fire around us.”



26

2 Timothy

Next week
2 Timothy
2:14-19



27