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Pastor's Corner

The Faith That Saves

Romans 8-11

Many people are struggling spiritually with their lives. This pandemic has made many question the relationship they have with God. Some have fallen prey to the enemy of our faith. **John 10:10 tells us the "the enemy comes to steal, kill and destroy. But I have come to give you life and give more abundantly."** There are individuals whose faith is not set in the truths of God but the ideas and understandings of opinion. Our salvation, our standing in Jesus Christ, cannot be changed by anything. This pandemic, this isolation, is shaking the foundation of people of faith.

I received a call from a young lady this past week. She was experiencing some real spiritual challenges. She spoke to me for quite some time about the enemy dominating over her life. She told me how the enemy was causing her to think thoughts she did not want to think. The enemy was causing her to do things she did not want to do. She told me she belongs to a church and that she was a Christian. She did not give me her name and I did not ask. I did tell her I was the pastor, and she began to share with me the fears she had.

As I listened to her I could not help but wonder how many people find themselves during this pandemic having to deal with the spiritual unrest that reigns in their lives. I began to wonder how many do not understand nor do they realize their victory in Christ. And if they have heard it, or read it, do they believe what they have heard or read? Do they believe, do *we* believe in the power of God to save? Do we believe that all things are possible for those who believe? (Mark 9:23)

The first thing that every person of faith must do is accept their personal faith in Jesus Christ as real. What I mean by that is, your faith in Jesus guarantees your salvation. **Ephesians 2:8-9 tells us, "It is by grace that you have been saved, by, through faith, this is not of yourselves, (this is not something you have done to earn, merit, deserve), it is a gift from God, (9) not by works, so that no one can boast." John 3:16 "for God so loved the world that He gave His only son and whosoever believeth in him shall not perish but have eternal life."** It is this gift of salvation that is ours, that cannot be taken away - that we must begin to embrace and internalize in times such as these. It is quite easy to succumb to the

powers that we see parading around as though they are all powerful. When in fact they are not. It is easy to believe that these earthly kings have control as well as the last word in world affairs. They do not. The power that you received in Christ upon your accepting Jesus as your Lord and Savior is real. It is everlasting. It can and will sustain you in times such as these. That the power that raised Jesus from the dead now resides in you by faith. **Romans 8:11 says, "And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to our mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you.**" This scripture is true. It is uplifting to those who embrace and receive it into their lives. This text tells us that the earthly forces in this world have no control over us unless we give it to them. These forces can make you do nothing unless you give them the keys to your life.

On the day of Pentecost when Jesus ascended to heaven, God's power, the Holy Spirit, that same power came down and became available to each of us who trust and believe in Jesus Christ. The same power that causes the blind to see, the lame to walk and raised Jesus from the grave lives in us. That same power lives through us. This is the power that allows us to stand in victory. This is the same power that defeats those agencies in our life that seek to destroy and diminish who we are in Christ.

It is important that we understand our spiritual position in Christ. God has equipped us with what we need to gain the victory over depression and the spiritual forces that confront us. Don't misunderstand me - I am not supposing the devil is behind every rock, or in every closet. What I am saying is that the spiritual forces are real. The spirit of evil is real. The forces of racism, hate and jealous are real. Fear is real. The only power on earth that can defeat fear is the love that God has for us. The scriptures tell us God is love. It is this love that will sustain and keep us through that we experience and go through.

Ephesians 6:1 says, **"Be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power. Put on the whole armor of God so that you can take a stand against the enemies' schemes. For our struggles are not against flesh and blood but against the rulers and against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms."** Trust is the work of our Lord and Savior Jesus for our salvation. Trust in the power of the Holy Spirit to keep us in times of trouble. Trust that God is in control. I told the young lady that she must engage in the praise of God daily if she wants to defeat the spiritual attack that is coming against her. There is a responsibility that we all have if we are to gain and maintain victory in this time of great spiritual stress. We must praise God daily. We pray daily, we seek God daily. That is our responsibility. God cannot and will not do it for us.

I prayed a prayer of victory for her. I will pray one for us as well:

Father, I come in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus and ask and give thanks for the forgiveness of my sins. I give thanks for the victory You, O Lord, have given me by faith. I trust in Your Word and in the salvation, you have provided in Jesus Christ. It is that victory over, death, sin and the enemy that will keep me and sustain me by faith. Thank you Lord, for all you have done for us, in Jesus name I pray, Amen.

God Bless and remain safe,

Pastor Gool