

4.14.24

Biblical Readiness:

To Regulate - To Resist - To Be Resilient

Introduction

We live in times of trouble - troubling times. The strategic movement of the world's leading cultures away from the objective and absolute principles of moral authority and a Judeo-Christian ideological order have positioned this weaponized agenda front and center. There is no doubt that this movement was elevated to "warp speed" by means of a global technopoly (a societal sensory control through the use and misuse of technology). The outcomes of moral ruination and God-less value systems were easily predictable by the now marginalized populous known as Biblical worldview Christians. There were far too many Christians unprepared for such a free-fall - they were not in a state of Biblical readiness and fell just as hard and compliantly as the rest. As I said, we live in times of trouble - troubling times. These are the days that the apostle Paul instructed Timothy would come - and they are here.

2 Timothy 3:1-5

But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of

pleasure rather than lovers of God, having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power.

Has the world seen itself in this condition before? Categorically, yes. there have been civilizations, world-powers, malevolent and diabolical dictators, cultural perversion, and sadistic sexual pervasiveness. However, never with such denigrating global alignment.

(Read and Review Roman's 1:18-32)

The Bible teaches that as true followers of Jesus, and people of genuine faith, we are not to be fearful, worried, or distracted by troubling times of these kind. In fact, the trouble that is set before us is the kind of trouble we have been prophetically warned of.

John 16:31-33

Jesus answered them (Disciples), *"Do you now believe? Behold, the hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and will leave me alone. **Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me.** I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. **In the world you will have tribulation.** But take heart; I have overcome the world."*

I Peter 4:12

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.

If we do become fearful, anxious, and distracted by the trouble that we see, hear and feel, we are vulnerable and likely to be overcome by the very trouble we were afraid of, anxious about, and distracted by. Becoming captivated and overcome in that way is not what any of us want for ourselves, or for anyone that we care about.

Please rest assured, that is not what God wants for us, nor is it His plan or purposed outcome for us.

Yet, we often find ourselves in that place and space - sometimes predictably, and sometimes surprisingly. As we all know this is not an emotionally or spiritually healthy or particularly righteous place to be; and it is certainly not a place or space we want to continue finding ourselves. At the Reunion Church we are actively doing something about this. We see, we hear, and we know *who and what* has captured culture, government, schools, church, family, and our nation. By the grace of God, and the leading of Holy Spirit, we are going to equip our community and condition our families to "Biblical Readiness." Here in the writing and instruction of Paul the apostle to Timothy the young pastor and protege` we have chosen our foundational passage for this series - ***Biblical Readiness.***

2 Timothy 4:1-4

I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. For the

time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.

What lies before us absolutely cannot be negotiated (not possible) by those believers not ready, for those not equipped, and for those unwilling to trust and follow the Biblical guideposts. Guideposts that reveal to us the direction we must go, and the distance we must travel to negotiate the journey and to arrive at our desired destination. When Jesus said, "*I am the way*" it was literally what He meant - that is why He also said, "*follow Me.*"

I'm the Way - Follow Me

In this series ***Biblical Readiness***, we are going to uncover the Scriptural guideposts necessary for negotiating the *present difficulties and pending trouble* that has become the current reality of our world.

Readiness and Biblical Readiness are conditions, or better yet, "states of being" that have of course obvious similarities. However, ***Biblical Readiness*** has a very distinct and objective meaning that must be understood clearly by those of us who are named as believers in Christ, or, whom decisively embraced their identity as a Biblical worldview Christian. Before moving ahead let's take a quick look at those distinctions between readiness and Biblical readiness.

[Readiness] *the state of being willfully and skillfully aware of, and prepared for, circumstances requiring a swift and actively precise response.*

[Biblical Readiness] would then logically be defined as: *the state of being willfully and skillfully aware of, and prepared for, circumstances requiring a swift and actively precise Biblical response.*

Biblical, just one word of difference between the two definitions - yet that one word (Biblical), sits at the focal point of the present-day trouble and human struggle.

***The Acceptance Therefore - The Rejection Thereof - The
Building Thereon - The Deconstruction Thereof - The belief
Therein - The Doubt Thereof - The Hatred and Hostility Thereto
The Love and Desire Therefore***

Polarizing seems almost understated.

For those who are committed to actively pursuing Biblical Readiness, as both a personal and collective state of being, we must not only identify and understand the Scriptural guideposts of readiness, but we must insist of ourselves that we do not become part of the deconstruct and teardown of those very guideposts intended to lead us through times of trouble. The mission is that we right and righteously interpret them in the context of the authors intended meaning and not our own so that we are not deceived and fall into the temptation to provisionally alter, re-define, and re-imagine

the Scripture as an open invitation to personal interpretation and self-truth. In other words...

**The Bible Says What I Want It To Say
It Means What I Want It To Mean**

That does not work. There is no integrity or moral logic to that process of reading, feeling, interpreting, and believing. There must be at least an sound elemental process in place with which we seek to right and righteously interpret Scripture as it was intended by it's authors of origin. How Scripture makes me feel when I read it is of course a real human response. However, how Scripture makes me feel as I read it is unreasonable as a reliable path to interpreting, understanding and believing it's context and content.

When I read something from scripture that says something that makes me feel uncomfortable or vulnerable, my human tendency is to then push away from that passage and the authors intended meaning. (For example: "forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so also you must forgive.) I do not like how that makes me feel. So, once I have pushed away and become guided by how it made me feel (in this case uncomfortable, mistreated, and vulnerable) now I deconstruct that scripture and I must reconstruct it to mean something less literal, less demanding, or difficult for me. In reality there is no longer a path to Biblical readiness for me. I have re-imagined my own truth, construct by how I felt the guideposts needed to be placed. I travel the path of difficulty and

trouble, following my guideposts. And, they are just that - mine. I can move them when I want based on how they make me feel.

However, I am not in a state of readiness - I am lost, simply because I have moved the guideposts so often I can no longer know which way to go to get through times of trouble - troubling times.

To be in a state of Biblical Readiness, I must be equipped with guideposts (Biblical truth) that does not move based on human want and desire. I want and desire many things. Some are right and righteous, but far too many are not.

How can I trust that? I can't.

Biblical Readiness allows me to trust eternal guideposts that lead me through trouble and difficulty. I can trust them because those guideposts have been in place since they were first given to those who placed them.

I find them - I trust them -and then go to them - I go through times of trouble and on to my place of triumph and peace

This is a good place to introduce a simple process for Biblical Readiness.

What did the guidepost say?

What was the purpose for what the guidepost said?

What will happen when I follow this guidepost?

Suddenly I realize something. I realize that I can go to that guidepost over and over again, because those guideposts have not ever moved - and they shall not be moved. That is Biblical readiness.

Once we have equipped ourselves to Biblical Readiness, and eliminated from the menu those destructive and spiritually fatal considerations, we can finally hear the voice of the Spirit, and be led by the Spirit away from the appetite of consequence of our present-darkness. The presence and work of the Holy Spirit will then serve as the central source used to move us soundly back and forth from any subjective dialogue to the objective and conclusively revealed truth of God's Word - Biblical Readiness.

To build a practical and approachable response to the strategic call for Biblical readiness, I am going to identify in the next few weeks *three contextually sound scriptural guideposts* to Biblical readiness. These scriptural guideposts will equip us...

To Regulate - To Resist - To Be Resilient

Conclusion

Daniel 6:1-23

It pleased Darius (King) to set over the kingdom 120 satraps, to be throughout the whole kingdom; and over them three high officials, of whom Daniel was one, to whom these satraps should give account, so that the king might suffer no loss. Then this Daniel became distinguished above all the other high officials and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him. And the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom. Then the high officials and the satraps sought to find a ground for complaint against Daniel with regard to the kingdom, but they could find no ground for complaint or any fault, because he was faithful, and no error or fault was found in him. Then

these men said, "We shall not find any ground for complaint against this Daniel unless we find it in connection with the law of his God." Then these high officials and satraps came by agreement to the king and said to him, "O King Darius, live forever! All the high officials of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the counselors and the governors are agreed that the king should establish an ordinance and enforce an injunction, that whoever makes petition to any god or man for thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions. Now, O king, establish the injunction and sign the document, so that it cannot be changed, according to the law of the Medes and the Persians, which cannot be revoked." Therefore King Darius signed the document and injunction.

When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem. He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done previously. Then these men came by agreement and found Daniel making petition and plea before his God. Then they came near and said before the king, concerning the injunction, "O king! Did you not sign an injunction, that anyone who makes petition to any god or man within thirty days except to you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?" The king answered and said, "The thing stands fast, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be revoked." Then they answered and said before the king, "Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or the injunction you have signed, but makes his petition three times a day."

Then the king, when he heard these words, was much distressed and set his mind to deliver Daniel. And he labored till the sun went down to rescue him. Then these men came by agreement to the king and said to the king, "Know, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians that no injunction or ordinance that the king establishes can be changed." Then the king commanded, and Daniel was brought and cast into the den of lions. The king declared to Daniel, "May your God, whom you serve continually, deliver you!" And a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet and with the signet of his lords, that nothing might be changed concerning Daniel. Then the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; no diversions were brought to him, and sleep fled from him.

Then, at break of day, the king arose and went in haste to the den of lions. As he came near to the den where Daniel was, he cried out in a tone of anguish. The king declared to Daniel, "O Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?" Then Daniel said to the king, "O king, live forever! My God sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths, and they have not harmed me, because I was found blameless before him; and also before you, O king, I have done no harm." Then the king was exceedingly glad, and commanded that Daniel be taken up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no kind of harm was found on him, because he had trusted in his God.

4.21.24

Biblical Readiness

Scriptural Guideposts: To Regulate - To Resist - To Be Resilient

Quick Review

*A Simple Process for Interpreting the Scriptural Guideposts of
Biblical Readiness*

The Ancient Prophet Daniel and Scriptural Guideposts

A Contextual and Conclusive Interpretation of II Timothy 4:1-5

2 Timothy 4:1-5

*I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom:
preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.*

Grammatical Analysis and Syntactical Structure of II Timothy 4:1-5

2 Timothy 4:1-5

I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and Christ.

Diamartyromai - with God and Christ as my witness, I bid to you in covenant and an oath of urgency.

Preach the Word.

Kerygma; Didache; - Proclaim the message of God's Word - speak truth - ask relevant questions - give right and righteous answers.

Be ready when it is both convenient and inconvenient.

Ephistemi; Maintain a sense of urgency and readiness regardless of the circumstances.

Correct - Rebuke - Encourage with full patience and complete instruction.

Elencho`; Epitima; Parakaleo; Use hopeful patience and full consideration to bring correction to those in error, to sit and silence those who are contentious and divisive.

There is a time coming when believers will not put up with the sound doctrine of Scripture.

Anechomai; Hygiaino`; ho Didaskalia; Those who seek to invalidate that which is proven accurate and correct.

But, according to their own desire for pleasure they will gather and attach themselves to as many teachers they can possibly find who will speak softly into their ears.

Epithymia; Corrupted and immoral desires that seek affirmation and acceptance.

They will turn their ears away from the truth, and wander off toward myths and philosophy.

Ale`thia; Ektrepo; ho Mythos; Those who wander away from truth to chase vain philosophies, godless ideologies and evil thoughts.

But you be self-controlled in all things. (Regulate)

Endure hardship. (Resist)

Do the work of an evangelist.

Fulfill your ministry. (Resilient)

Ne`pho`; Kakapatheo`; Euangelion; Plerophore`o; Diokania; in all you think, say do, be moderate and focused on what and who are important - even in the face of misfortune and difficulty, present the Gospel and complete all that you have been called to.

Contextualized Commentary for Biblical Readiness

As it directly relates to the context of Biblical readiness and the intended meaning of Paul's text (2 Timothy 4:1-5), there are three aspects of "the charge" to be considered. He calls Timothy/Us to readiness, and to a clear sense of what and how this charge and assignment needs to be done.

Paul's Charge and Assignment - Verse Two

The essence of the charge is in the three words *'Preach the word'*.

We should see quickly that the message Timothy is to preach is not called a 'word' (a spoken utterance). But rather, it is **the** word, God's Word which God has inspired - God has breathed - and God has spoken.

Once that is said there is no further need for specifics, Timothy will know at once that it is the body of sound doctrine, Old Testament principles, moral law, and prophetic revelation, the message of the Gospel of Christ Jesus, and the proclamation of apostolic truths which he has been taught by Paul.

It is indeed all of that which he is committing to Timothy
To Timothy, to pass on to others - to pass on to others - to pass on to others - to pass on to us - to pass on to others. That is the continuity and commission of Biblical readiness in obedient action.

The full deposit of faith - sound, patient, informed and informative teaching
- unaltered and unashamed truth - proclaim the name - stay away from the fame - eyes on Jesus - not on me.

Continue in that which you have known from childhood; that which you have followed, learned and firmly believed. The same charge is laid upon the Biblical Church in every age of every time and every season. We have no liberty to invent our message, but only to communicate ***'the word'*** which God has spoken and has now committed to the Church as a sacred trust.

Paul's Premise and Purpose - Verse 3-5

It has already become apparent in early chapters of this letter both that Timothy was unassertive and reserved by disposition and that the times in which he lived and worked were—to say the least—difficult and demanding. Surely he must have been moved but apprehensive as he read Paul's intense charge to keep preaching the word. Maybe he would even be tempted to pull-back from such a responsibility. So Paul does more than issue a charge; he adds incentives and hope. He reminds Timothy look in three directions—first at Jesus Christ the coming judge and king, secondly at the world's condition, and thirdly to look to him, Paul, the aging prisoner approaching his final days, knows he will die before the return of Christ. The hope of glory allows us all to look joyfully and peacefully to the beginning of our days of being present with the Lord.

Paul is giving a second premise on which to ground his charge. It is the full reality of dark and difficult days coming. Although the apostle seems to be anticipating that the situation will deteriorate, it is also plain from what he has written earlier that such a time has already begun for Timothy. The central sign for days of hopelessness, chaos, and human depravity is the loss of truth. Truth as moral code for thought and behavior, truth as the identity for humanity and meaning for life, truth as the hope for salvation and eternal life, truth as Jesus Christ - Yeshua. When humanity rejects truth of this magnitude and significance there is collapse and ruin. Preach the word Timothy - no matter what. That is Biblical readiness unpacked and made known.

Conclusion

This chapter contains some of the very last words spoken or written by the apostle Paul. They are certainly the last which have survived. He is writing within weeks, perhaps even within days, of his martyrdom (killed for his public witness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ). According to a reliable historical traditions he was beheaded on the *Ostian Way*. For about 30 years without intermission Paul served and worked as an *apostle* (one who is sent), an itinerant (traveling) *evangelist*, as a *teacher* (making disciples), and as a *prophetic voice* to the New Testament Church. Listen to how he reflects as he writes. "*I have fought a good fight, I have finished the race and kept the faith*" (verse 7). In hope and humility he continues, *'henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness' which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.*" (verse 8).

So these words to Timothy, are also Paul's last legacy to the church - *all who have loved and kept the promise of His Word and those in a state of readiness - having made themselves ready*. Paul's last words breathe an air of not only dramatic intensity, but also they possess great spiritual gravity and significance. It is impossible to read them without being profoundly inspired. Most importantly because the call of Biblical readiness was not only to Timothy and the early Church but to those of us who in *present-day - real-time* are committed to living out our lives according to the unchanging and eternal Word of God.

4.28.24

Biblical Readiness

Scriptural Guideposts: To Regulate - To Resist - To Be Resilient

The Scriptural Guidepost Premise to Regulate:

We can...

Regulate to Biblical Readiness by the Working and Presence of the Holy Spirit

We can...

Resist to Biblical Readiness Through the Authority and Truth of the Written Word of God

We can...

Become Resilient in Biblical Readiness by the Spirit and the Word

Introduction

Let's start with the first of the three Scriptural guideposts of Biblical Readiness - *To Regulate*. To reach a state of Biblical readiness, we must find the guidepost that shows the way to regulate. As followers of Christ and those who desire biblical readiness, the only way to regulate this life is in the Holy Spirit. We walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh. The Holy Spirit is ever present (in all of life), to *regulate* ourselves into alignment with the Will and the Word of God. There are some generic and common definitions for the term *regulate* that will give some understanding of the

term - only to help serve the main objective - knowing and showing the Scriptural Guideposts to Biblical Readiness.

[regulate] to control, manage, govern, to guide, or to supervise for the purpose of maintaining proper balance and operation, or the effectiveness and efficiency of a person.

Now with that fundamental understanding, let's look to find the righteous use and right context of the word "regulate" as it relates directly to the presence and work of the Holy Spirit in the *day-to-day* life of an interested and engaged follower of Christ.

Or how about this?... *"the plan, purpose and the practical application of the Holy Spirit in the daily life of the Biblical Worldview Christian."* With that base-line definition, now we can look at a "working" Biblical definition and a context for the word - **regulate**.

[regulate] to learn, to love, and to lean on the active presence of the Holy Spirit and the daily guidance of God's Word to achieve a balance of righteous effectiveness and divine efficiency within a person of faith.

The premise here will be to present biblical evidence for the following:

The Holy Spirit is central to regulating us in the practical processes of Biblical Readiness.

(I Timothy 6:11-16)

But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. 12 Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. 13 I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, 14 to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 which he will display at the proper time—he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, 16 who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.

Without the genuine and active work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer, one cannot regulate with righteous efficiency and effectiveness in living and fulfilling the plans and purposes of God.

(II Peter 1:3-8)

His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, 4 by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped

from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. 5 For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, 6 and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, 7 and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. 8 For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

One can validate the gifts and working of the Holy Spirit (service and ministry) through the daily cultivation and recognition of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The biblical evidence of indwelling of the Holy Spirit is the fruit of the Spirit:

(I Corinthians 13:1-2)

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

(Galatians 5:20-26)

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. 24 And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit. 26 Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

The Holy Spirit serves to regulate the mind (thought), the emotion (heart), and the will (attitude and action) of every Christian.

(Philippians 4:4-9)

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. 5 Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; 6 do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. 8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. 9 What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

(Philippians 2:3-8)

Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. 4 Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests

of others. 5 Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, 6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Regulating to Biblical Readiness - Using the Model of Christ

Mark 4:35-41

On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side." 36 And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. And other boats were with him. 37 And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. 38 But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. And they woke him and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" 39 And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. 40 He said to them, "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?" 41 And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

Mark 8:31-33

And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again. 32 And he said this plainly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. 33 But turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man."

Matthew 20:20-28

Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came up to him with her sons, and kneeling before him she asked him for something. 21 And he said to her, "What do you want?" She said to him, "Say that these two sons of mine are to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your kingdom." 22 Jesus answered, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am to drink?" They said to him, "We are able." 23 He said to them, "You will drink my cup, but to sit at my right hand and at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father." 24 And when the ten heard it, they were indignant at the two brothers. 25 But Jesus called them to him and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. 26 It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, 27 and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, 28 even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Matthew 26:40-41

And he came to the disciples and found them sleeping. And he said to Peter, "So, could you not watch with me one hour? 41 Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

5.5.24

Biblical Readiness

Scriptural Guideposts to Biblical Readiness: To Regulate - To Resist - To Resiliency

Scriptural Guidepost Premise to Resist: (2 Corinthians 10:3-6)

For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. 4 For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. 5 We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ, 6 being ready to punish every disobedience, when your obedience is complete.

From this Scriptural Guidepost We Know That We Can...

One) We can regulate towards Biblical Readiness by the working and Presence of the Holy Spirit.

Two) We can resist temptation and evil to reach Biblical Readiness through the authority and Truth of the written Word of God.

Three) We Become resilient as a condition of Biblical Readiness by the working of the Spirit and the Word.

Introduction

Last week we concluded with clear evidence for the presence and working of the Holy Spirit as an essential and available guidepost needed to regulate ourselves to biblical alignment and to a state of biblical readiness. In week four of our series Biblical Readiness, I want to introduce the second of three scriptural guideposts leading to Biblical Readiness - *To Resist*. More directly, *To Resist Temptation and Evil Through the Written Word of God*. The premise for "resisting through the written word" as a scriptural guidepost is built upon a foundation that declares to us that the written Word of God is "*the light to our path and the lamp to our feet*" needed to resist all that tempts us and threatens to lead us into evil. We must come to fully understand that the written Word of the Lord exists to resist. Meaning... The Word of God **exists** as eternal truth and holds all authority and power to **resist** the temptations of the evil one. I can't say this any clearer - to resist every temptation will deliver us from all evil - making this scriptural guidepost essential to our mission towards biblical readiness.

Psalm 119: 9-11

How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your word. 10 With my whole heart I seek you; let me not wander from your commandments! 11 I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

From these passages we clearly see from the Old Testament to the New, we are instructed in how to...

resist that which is wicked, evil, rebellious, defiant, divisive, hate-filled, hostile, and all that opposes and stands against the principles, precepts, knowledge, and the heart of God the Father, the Creator of all heaven and earth.

Resistance in this context is a ***righteous response of faith against all that is godless*** - (without love for, and worship of God). and must come from us by the power and presence of the Holy Spirit, the authority and truth of the written Word of God. This manifests in various forms and every circumstance of life. The working of the Spirit and the Word must be evident and practical (more on this next week). The faithful resistance certainly must be understood and acknowledged as a righteous act of obedience and worship to God from the people of God.

Contextual Word Play - Resist

Definition: [struggle with/against, fight (against), put up a fight against, battle against, stand up to, withstand, stand one's ground against, hold one's ground against, hold off, hold out against, contend with, confront, face up to; fend off, keep at bay, ward off, keep at arm's length, withstand, be proof against, hold out against, combat, counter; weather, endure, outlast; repel, be resistant to, be impervious to, be impermeable to, keep out]

You get the picture...

James 4:4-10

You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship (like-minded kinship) with the world is enmity (irreconcilable unfixable hostility) with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend (closely associated, named and identified with) of the world makes himself an enemy of God. [5] Or do you suppose it is to no purpose (for no good reason) that the Scripture says, "He yearns jealously (desires to forcefully guard and protect) over the spirit that he has made to dwell (rest within us) in us"? [6] But he gives more grace (kindly grants opportunities). Therefore it says, "God opposes the proud but gives grace (understanding) to the humble (contrite and broken)." [7] Submit (obediently, willingly, yield to the Holy Spirit) yourselves therefore to God. (then) Resist (respond in opposition) the devil, and he will flee (disappear quickly) from you. [8] Draw near to God, and he will draw near (come close) to you. Cleanse (empty) your hands, you sinners, and purify (wash and settle) your hearts, you double-minded. [9] Be wretched (broken) and mourn and weep (tears of sorrow). Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. [10] Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt (elevate to a higher position) you. ESV

1 Peter 5:6-11

Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, [7] casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. [8] Be sober-minded; be watchful.

Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. [9] Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. [10] And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. [11] To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen. ESV

Hebrews 12:3-6

Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. 4 In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. 5 And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? “My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. 6 For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives.”

Resisting Temptation and Evil through the Written Word of God into Biblical Readiness - Using the Model of Christ

Matthew 4:1-11

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. 2 And after fasting forty days and forty nights,

he was hungry. 3 And the tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.” 4 But he answered, “**It is written, “ ‘Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’ ”** 5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple 6 and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, “ ‘He will command his angels concerning you,’ and “ ‘On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.’ ” 7 Jesus said to him, “**Again it is written, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’ ”** 8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. 9 And he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.” 10 Then Jesus said to him, “**Be gone, Satan! For it is written, “ ‘You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.’ ”** 11 Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him. *ESV*

Resisting for Biblical Readiness - The Practical Steps

Ephesians 6:10-17 (NASB)

Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might.

Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.

Take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.

Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE;

Taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

Finally, take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

5.19.24

Biblical Readiness

Scriptural Guideposts to Biblical Readiness: To Regulate - To Resist - To Resiliency

Scriptural Guidepost Premise for Spiritual Resiliency:

(Psalm 1:3-6) Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; 2 but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. 3 He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers. 4 The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away. 5 Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; 6 for the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

(Jeremiah 17:7-8) "Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. 8 He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit."

(Psalm 62:5-7) "For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence, for my hope is from him. 6 He only is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I

shall not be shaken. ⁷ On God rests my salvation and my glory; my mighty rock, my refuge is God.”

(Hebrews 10:23-25) “Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. 24 And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, 25 not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”

(Matthew 7:24-25) Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25 And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock.

From These Scriptural Guideposts We Know That We Can...

One) *Become spiritually resilient as the culmination of regulating life and resisting temptation, become more actively present and take on their full precedence within us.*

Regulating Life: The Holy Spirit regulates us with active evidence - the Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:20), and daily manifestation - the Gifts of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:7).

Resisting Temptation: The written Word of God spoken in the face of temptation has the spiritual authority to keep us from all evil (Psalm 119:9-11).

Two) *Sustain significant levels of spiritual resiliency to help us remain in a continued state of Biblical readiness (Philippians 4:4-9).*

Three) *Faithfully reach for spiritual resiliency which is the final guidepost needed to lead us into a state of Biblical Readiness.*

Introduction

The word resilience comes from the scientific discipline of physics. The word originates from two Latin words. *Re*, meaning “back”, and *Salire*; meaning “to jump or leap.” So, the literal definition of the word resilient means “to bounce back.” The word is associated with withstanding shock, difficulty, suffering or trauma - returning to form, maintaining strength, enduring and not giving up. Sounds like something we need spiritually, something we should seriously pursue. Right?

From a more clinical or psychological approach, resilience looks more like this. Resilience is defined as how one “deals effectively with pressure, ambiguous and emerging conditions, and multiple tasks; remains optimistic and persistent, even under adversity or uncertainty. Recovers quickly from setbacks. Anticipates changes and learns from mistakes.”

Resilience is the ability to function well in the face of adversity.

The DLA (Defense Logistics Agency) resilience model claims four pillars: *mental, physical, social and spiritual*; that balancing these four components help strengthen your life.

Mental: The ability to effectively cope with mental stressors and challenges. Pay attention to your needs and feelings. Our thoughts control our energy.

Physical: The ability to adopt and sustain healthy behaviors.

Regularly work out and continually monitor physical stamina.

Recognize the connection between mind and body: strong bodies help build strong minds.

Social: The ability to network. Build and value interpersonal relationships and social networks. Social connections with others widen perceptions and grow character.

Spiritual: The ability to adhere to beliefs, principles, or values needed to persevere and prevail in accomplishing missions.

Those four pillars may of course be helpful pathways of resilience that serve a significant purpose in treatment and therapy. However, let me be clear. I believe there are significant biblical principles and precepts regarding spiritual resiliency that more than likely help us avoid the therapy and treatment pathways if we are willing to dig into the objective Word of God for context and meaning that can move us forward to a resiliency that leads to wellness and wholeness (healing) and then on to a place of wholistic strength and Biblical Readiness.

Ironically, the Bible often describes resilience in battle terms:

Though the righteous fall seven times, they rise again... (Proverbs 24:16).

In the academic community I have heard resilience described as a "spiritual immune system." To live spiritually healthy lives trusting fully on the promises of God, we must allow God to build within us an ability to

"bounce back." This is the Biblical process to the transformative power of spiritual resilience.

Israel would have to demonstrate resilience during the arduous season of fighting for the Promised Land - and they still are in this very moment. These battles were not without mistakes, setbacks, and errors. IN HIS GRACE AND MERCY, God provides us with opportunities for “*begin agains*”. The renewal of their covenants with God allowed Israel to continue bouncing back.

The prophet Isaiah ties together the idea of renewed faith and resilience.
How do we bounce back after falling?

*Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall;
but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will
soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will
walk and not be faint. (Isaiah 40:30-31)*

Not surprisingly, secular research mirrors this idea. After setbacks, we can renew faith and our resilience by exploring three simple ideas: ***I am - I have - and I can.***

Please hear me on this. I like, but not love this... and since I am not a secularist, and continue my journey towards fearing God more than I fear man, and trusting God more than I trust myself. I believe this is better presented as: ***God is - God has - God can.***

God Is - Life's continuous challenges and trials force us into doubts and even crisis of faith when we lose sight of who God is, or worse yet, do not know according to His Word who He is. Knowing who He is to us and who He longs to be for us will lead us into repeated moments of resiliency in every situation and circumstance.

God Has - When we face struggle and even failure, we remember we have promises from God, who is working with our best interest on our behalf. He has promised to never leave or forsake us - that He cares for us even when we cannot care for ourselves.

God Can - Our genuine reliance on Jesus reminds us that God "can" do the impossible, in fact, immeasurably more and above all that we can imagine. And, that we can do all things through Christ Jesus who strengthens us (Philippians 4:13).

This is hope, and this is how hope in the Lord renews our faith, then strengthens and forms resilience within us to lead us through life's greatest difficulties. And although life may be overwhelming at times, God promises that He will give us the strength to bounce back. Jesus said that — "*a bruised reed he will not break*" (Matthew 12:20). When you find yourself under extraordinary pressure, ask yourself these three questions: Who is God? What does God have? What can God do?

Resiliency Leading To Biblical Readiness - Using the Model of Christ

The life of the incarnate Christ - God with us - the Word Became Flesh, was a study in resiliency. From the divine circumstances of His immaculate conception, to His mother's flight from Herod, His angelic and prophetic birth in a stone birthing manger made for Passover lambs, despised of His

own people, rejected by the religion of His own faith, beaten and suffered under the judgments of Caiaphas, Herod, and Pilate, and ultimately His brutal execution at the hands of Rome. Yet there He hung as the model for all resiliency - “Father, forgive them”... Buried and mourned - dead but not done - breathing in the Spirit of Life - breathing out the promise of the Holy Spirit - sending the faithful out - ascending to Glory and to the right Hand of the Father - interceding for our resiliency and readiness. Yes, I say, use the resiliency model of Christ.

(John 14) *The Pathway to Spiritual Resiliency*

Resiliency Leading to Biblical Readiness - The Practical Steps

Romans 5:1-5

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. ² Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. ³ Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴ and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, ⁵ and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.