

Stop, Drop and Roll

In the book of Joel, we see that the people of Israel had a locust plague that was major devastation to the land and crushing to the nation. Joel, one of the earlier minor prophets, prophesied to the entire land of Judah during this time of devastation (**Joel 1:1-4**). Chapter 1 of Joel addresses the crisis. This plague of locusts resulted in a loss of crops and vegetation, pasture for the cattle and sheep, famine and drought. Sometimes God uses situations, people and trauma to **Stop** us in our tracks, so that we can **Drop** and rely on Him totally, and, then **Roll** into what He's calling us to do!

We need to briefly look at the 4 stages of a locust in order to get a full picture of the devastation they caused in the land of Judah:

- **Hatchling:** consumes ground vegetation
- **Hopper:** completes the destruction of tender vegetation
- **Winged Hopper:** attacks the branches of trees
- **Mature Locust:** strips the bark of trees

Locusts travel in swarms up to 60 miles per day, which can be up to 10 miles wide and 10 miles long, moving at 250 feet per hour! They consume EVERYTHING in their path, nothing can stop them – and – this is what the Israelites were facing!

STOP: During this plague the people of Israel would've loved to have been able to go back to the way it was before. God will use a challenging moment like this to help us grow. In this situation, God was saying: Be Still, Pay Attention, Pause. The Israelites had lost fellowship with the Lord.

DROP: Repent from Sin because Sin brings about destruction in our lives as well as the lives of others. This destruction and loss was due to Israel's inability to be obedient to God (**Joel 1:9, 1:12-14, 1-16**).

ROLL: Chapter 2 of Joel anticipates the disaster and offers a way out of the situation. God had a solution for the Israelites to get back on track (**Joel 2:28, 2:32, 3:21**). No matter what circumstances we encounter, God is always in control. Do you feel that you have fallen off track? Where are you in your spiritual walk now? What area of your life would you like God to restore?

Some of the ways that you can move back towards God:

- Worship
- Prayer
- Fasting
- Walking with and being obedient to God
- Surrendering your heart and life to God

What does ROLL and full surrender look like for you?

- Showing up to work on time
- Leading or attending a small group
- Bringing the Kingdom of God to your job
- Starting a non-profit
- Going back to school
- Saying YES to God and being obedient

What are the things that are STOPPING you in your tracks and DROPPING you to your knees?

- Family
- Drugs and alcohol
- Finding issues with everyone else but ignoring your own issues
- Constantly focusing on the issues vs. all God has done and is doing
- Your self-talk
- Lack of reliance of anyone but yourself

Many people can and do look at the book of Joel as a book about death and destruction. Looking at it from God's perspective and through His eyes, it is a story of His Mercy and Grace; His love, caring and His providing the solution of His Son, Jesus.

Judgement is coming, but, His Mercy is available!!