

GOD IS NEVER SURPRISED

BISHOP RC BLAKES, JR.

We are living in a generation that is over-informed and under-anchored. You can pull up the news on your phone and instantly absorb the trauma of the entire globe. You go to work and manage the shifting expectations of your boss. You come home and try to navigate the complex emotional needs of your family. Many of you in this room are highly accomplished. You know how to build businesses, run households, and lead teams. But internally? You are exhausted.

You are carrying a quiet, low-grade depression because you are constantly trying to control outcomes that are completely out of your hands. When things get chaotic, our human reflex is to grip the steering wheel tighter. We try to budget, plan, and out-think the crisis. We think that if we can just figure out the solution, our anxiety will finally drop.

But I need to tell you a profound truth today: living by faith is the only way to stay emotionally regulated in a chaotic world.

If your peace is tied to predictability, you will live your entire life on a nervous system rollercoaster. But the Gospel offers us a different way to live. We do not have to panic, because the God we serve never panics. He is never caught off guard by your crisis. He already has the blueprint.

JOHN 6:1-13 KJV

1 After these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias. 2 And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased. 3 And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples. 4 And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh. 5 When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? 6 And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do. 7 Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little. 8 One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother,

saith unto him, 9 There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many? 10 And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. 11 And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would. 12 When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. 13 Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.

#1 STOP DOING THE MATH IN A MIRACLE ZONE

Notice what happens here. Jesus looks at a massive deficit - thousands of hungry people and no food.

He asks Philip a question, and Philip immediately starts doing the math. He calculates that half a year's wages wouldn't even buy everyone a single bite. Philip dysregulates because he is looking at the size of the problem through the lens of his own limitations.

JOHN 6:5-6 NIV

When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming toward him, he said to Philip, 'Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?' He asked this only to test him, for he already had in mind what he was going to do.

How many times have you let a situation ruin your peace because you were doing the math? You looked at the diagnosis, you looked at the bank account, you looked at the brokenness in your marriage, and you said, "This doesn't add up." You are absolutely right. It doesn't add up in the natural. But Jesus wasn't asking Philip for a financial strategy; He was inviting Philip into a faith response. The Holy Spirit will sometimes allow you to face a problem you cannot solve to break your addiction to your own self-reliance. Jesus already had the miracle mapped out. He just wanted to see if Philip would trust Him.

"Worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow, it empties today of its strength." - Corrie ten Boom

PROVERBS 3:5-6 KJV

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

#2 SURRENDER YOUR NEED FOR THE BLUEPRINT

We hate living in the dark. When sudden grief or debilitating disappointment hits, we immediately demand answers from God. We want to know why it happened, when it will end, and how He plans to fix it. We think clarity will bring us comfort. But the Holy Spirit does not always give you the blueprint; He gives you Himself.

HEBREWS 11:8 NIV

By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going.

Living by faith means surrendering your emotional need for control to the Holy Spirit. He is the ultimate therapist. Co-regulating with the Holy Spirit means that when your environment is chaotic, you do not match the energy of the storm. You match the energy of the Savior sleeping in the back of the boat. Faith is not knowing what is going to happen next. Faith is absolute confidence in the character of the One who holds what happens next.

Abraham stepped out without a map. He had to trade his need for certainty for intimacy with God. If you demand to know every step before you obey, you aren't walking by faith; you are walking by sight.

"Faith never knows where it is being led, but it loves and

knows the One who is leading." - Oswald Chambers

#3 REGULATION REQUIRES REVELATION, NOT RESOLUTION

Philippians 4 tells us that the peace of God transcends all understanding. What does that mean for your daily life? It means that true, biblical regulation happens before the problem is solved.

If you are waiting for your wayward child to come home, or your financial debt to clear, or your body to be totally healed before you finally exhale, you will spend years of your life trapped in anxiety.

Resolution is when the problem goes away. Revelation is when you realize God is with you right in the middle of it. Jesus already knows what He is going to do. When you get a revelation of His sovereign control, your nervous system can finally rest, even while the storm is still raging.

PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7 NIV

6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

The Midnight Surrender

There was a woman who spent her entire life as the ultimate fixer. She ran a successful business, managed a beautiful home, and was the person everyone else called when their lives fell apart. She knew how to budget, how to plan, and how to execute. But a few years ago, she hit a wall that her resume could not climb.

Her youngest son was in a horrific accident.

She found herself in the cold, sterile hallway of a trauma center at two in the morning. The doctors were running tests. The chaos was deafening. Nurses rushing past, machines blaring, the smell of antiseptic heavy in the air. For the first twelve hours, she did what she always did. She went into

management mode. She was on her phone calling out-of-state specialists, researching medical data, trying to calculate the odds. She was doing the math in a miracle zone.

By day three, the lead surgeon came out, looked her in the eye, and said the words every fixer dreads: "There is nothing else we can do. We just have to wait."

The illusion of control shattered. She walked into a small, empty hospital chapel, completely dysregulated. She fell to her knees on the hard floor, weeping, absolutely exhausted from trying to hold the universe together with her own two hands. She cried out, "God, what are we going to do?"

She was waiting for a blueprint. She was waiting for a medical strategy.

Instead, the room went completely still. She felt a heavy, warm blanket of peace drop over her shoulders. The Holy Spirit did not give her a five-point plan. He whispered one sentence into her spirit:

"I have been standing in tomorrow for an eternity, and I am already holding him."

In that exact moment, the panic broke. The chaos in her nervous system shut down. Nothing in her physical circumstance had changed yet. Her son was still in the bed. The doctors were still unsure. But she stood up from that chapel floor, walked back into the intensive care unit, pulled a chair up to her son's bed, and fell sound asleep.

She slept in the middle of the storm.

Why? Because she finally realized she was not the manager of the crisis. She did not have to figure it out. God was not pacing the floors of Heaven wondering how to handle the hospital bill or the trauma. He was never surprised by the storm, and He already knew what He was going to do.

Some of you are sitting in that chapel right now. You are exhausted from trying to fix a situation that is totally out of your hands. Let it go. Stop pacing the floor. Drop the math. The King of Heaven is already standing in your tomorrow, and He is fully in control.

