

Introduction

1. Death Valley

SLIDE 1 - Heading into the valley

SLIDE 2 - Temperature

"I'm not hot"

2. Christians are not afraid to die

SLIDE 3 - Goonies

Matthew 16:24-26a - Then Jesus told his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. [25] For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. [26] For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul?"

(1) Surrender is the the path out of death's valley

Psalm 23:4,6 - Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life...

(2) What really satisfies, comes through a surrendered life.

I. Fear is the enemy of surrender (vs 2:1-21)

1. You cannot control your fears (v1-7a)

Genesis 27:41 - Now Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father had blessed him, and Esau said to himself, "The days of mourning for my father are approaching; then I will kill my brother Jacob."

surface vs. root

(1) **Desires** - (c.s. belonging, security, significance, touch) the object of our perceived happiness; formed by the most compelling narrative or experience

Tells you what really matters to you

1. Controlled by supplanting them with a more compelling narrative or experience

(2) **States of being** (peaceful, restless, hopeful, hopeless) - the current perception of our trajectory in relationship to our desires

Tells you how you think it will really go

1. Controlled by change of perspective

(3) **Emotions** - our internal response to how we perceive our environment, relationships & experiences affect our desires

Trying to tell you how to navigate your desires

1. Cannot be controlled; only learn from them, as...
2. Impaired by them...

2. Your fears can control you (7b-21)

When you're afraid (control) you'll try everything

All impaired
fear

(1) Fear makes your posture guarded (v 7b-8)

1. We don't fully trust
2. Guarded w/ others
3. Everyone is a potential threat
4. Control environment

All control

(2) Fear makes your interactions manipulative (v 13-21)

1. Neutralize the potential threat people are to what you want
2. Deceptions, flattery,

No surrender

(3) Fear makes your faith shallow (9-12)

1. "You said..."
2. Your faith is about fears

2 Timothy 1:7 - for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.

1 John 4:18 - There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love.

"Fear is punishment"

3. But fear also catalyzes something else, very important to Christian living...

II. Struggle is the engagement of surrender (v 32:22-30)

Fear catalyzes struggle w/ our faith, a necessary component of growth and eventual surrender. What does this kind of struggling look like?

1. Struggle is personal (v 22-24a)

- (1) You alone must do the struggling
- (2) No more drafting; no one can do it for you.
- (3) Deal w/ your own fears

2. Struggle is prolonged (v 24b)

- (1) You need to be prepared for this to be a long-term process
- (2) No short-cuts.
- (3) Christian struggle is the process of reconciling the fears we feel, about the desires we have, with the promises God's made

3. Struggle is painful (v 25-30)

- (1) When you won't surrender, God allows pain as a last resort to death
- (2) Some of you will walk w/ a limp

Prophet
Shakira

III. Weakness is the evidence of surrender (v. 32:31-33:11)

1. We know we've surrendered when we let others see us weak (v. 32:31-32)

Tired
&
Compromised

(1) Vulnerability in community is evidence of surrender

(2) Present tense; unconquered

2. We know we've surrendered when we let go of control (v. 33:1-3)

(1) Orientated to the well being of others (not leverage)

(2) Process over outcome; Jacob doesn't know what will happen

3. We know we've surrendered when we let God be enough (v. 33:4-11)

(1) v. 11 - "I have enough"

(2) Do you?

2 Corinthians 12:7-10 - So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. [8] Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. [9] But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. [10] For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Conclusion

1. From getting to giving

(1) Jacob wanted God's blessing his whole life.

Imperfect (in progress) vs perfect (complete) aspects

SLIDE 4

He doesn't want a blessing for authority, but one w/ authority.

SLIDE 5

SLIDE 6

He doesn't want a blessing that entitles him to earthly possessions, but heavenly riches

SLIDE 7

SLIDE 8

He doesn't want a blessing to be the favored son of Isaac, but to be the redeemed son of Yahweh.

(2) And now, here at the end, he wants nothing more than to give it away.

(3) Jacob has raised the white flag on his heart

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2. Today is the day for some of you
Death Valley

(1) Your fears are the enemy of surrender because you are letting them control you

(2) There are areas of your life that these fears are revealing you need to begin wrestling with God.

1. Personally; prolonged; painful

(3) You'll know once you've surrendered

1. You'll let others see you weak (not victim)
2. You'll let go of control
3. Jesus will be enough (give blessing)