

## Lesson 7

# Breaking Down Our Insecurity

## Introduction

Previously, we have learned about the need to walk by faith. This is where we move forward each day, looking for how God is working providentially in our lives, lifting us out of problems and using us effectively in the kingdom. It is a mindset that trusts God in working through our weaknesses and challenges to bring greater attention to His glory.

Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and reaching forward to what is ahead, I pursue as my goal the prize promised by God's heavenly call in Christ Jesus.

– Philippians 3.13-14

The principle of *forgetting what is behind and reaching forward to what is ahead* is very much a part of the daily life of a Christian. The key to success is being intentional in choosing who we will listen to.

## What keeps us from walking by faith?

How can we interfere with our ability to accept what God is doing in our lives?

### ***Believing God works only through the Word***

Calvinistic teaching completely eliminates a person's responsibility when it comes to salvation. All activity is assigned to God. Men and women are helpless to resist God's call – a person will play no role whatsoever. As the Restoration Movement leaders and influencers taught their growing movement in the mid-late 19<sup>th</sup> century, they rightly insisted on human freewill in choosing or rejecting God's salvation call. However, some tended toward the other extreme by almost completely removing God out of involvement with a person's salvation – insisting that the Word *alone* works to bring people to salvation. In this belief, the power for salvation resides in words, logic, and reason to influence a person to faith and repentance.

This belief fits in well when operating from the perspective of works and performance-based salvation, which has characterized so many Christians in the Restoration Movement over the last 250 years. God's grace and involvement in redemption almost seems to end at the cross after which a person has to rely upon his own reasoning skills and personal strength to get through life's challenges and temptations. God is there mostly to judge, not provide help. There is never any security in this perspective because one is always left to wonder *am I doing enough?* There are always more commandments and laws to keep ... and *it's all up to me* to get it done. This is self-reliance ... not God-dependency.

This emphasis on self-reliance has contributed to a lack of education of how God really works through the Spirit who dwells within and by His providence in the day-to-day matters of life. While never negating the principle of personal responsibility and diligence to submitting to the Spirit's work (2 Peter

1.5), we must learn to ask for and then look for God's helping hand *first*. God lives to help. He loves to help.

You gave me life and faithful love, and your care has guarded my life.

– Job 10.12

Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be afraid, for I am your God. I will strengthen you; I will help you; I will hold on to you with my righteous right hand.

– Isaiah 41.10

The LORD gives his people strength; the LORD blesses his people with peace.

– Psalm 29.11

Keep your life free from the love of money. Be satisfied with what you have, for he himself has said, I will never leave you or abandon you. Therefore, we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?

– Hebrews 13.5-6

casting all your cares on him, because he cares about you.

– 1 Peter 5.7

Truth is never in extremes. There has to be a balance. God works for our salvation. We work for our salvation. As we do, we rely upon His strength and help via the Spirit and the work of providence to get us through the rest of this life and home to heaven.

### ***How others judge us***

Another problem that keeps us from walking in faith is allowing the judgments and conclusions of others to stifle our progress. Words are powerful and do have a lasting impact. *Death and life are in the power of the tongue*, Proverbs 18.21a. Psalm 52.2 likens the tongue to a *sharpened razor that devises destruction, working treachery*. Bitter words *are like arrows*, Psalm 64.3. Every person has had the arrows of sharp criticism and judgment of others fly deep into their heart.

This often happens at the worst possible time. It certainly did for Job, who lost all his children, wealth, and possessions on a single day, Job 1. Sometime later, he lost his health, Job 2. The *greatest man among all the people of the east*, 1.3, a man of honor and dignity,<sup>11</sup> had now descended to the depths and was at rock bottom: *infected . . . with terrible boils from the soles of his feet to the top of his head, (taking) a piece of broken pottery to scrape himself while he sat among the ashes*, 2.7-8. Job had now been *stripped (of his) honor and the crown (had been) removed from (his) head*, 19.9.<sup>12</sup>

It is at that exact moment his wife enters and condemns him for holding his integrity. He *did not sin or blame God for anything*, 1.22. For Job's wife, the time had come to simply give up and just die. There was absolutely no hope. Anything else was simply ridiculous and absurd. *I am a laughingstock to my friends, by calling on God, who answers me. The righteous and blameless man is a laughingstock*, 12.4. The arrows from

---

<sup>11</sup> See Job 29 for a description of Job's life before his trials came upon him.

<sup>12</sup> See Job 30.10-19 for a description of Job's life after his trials came upon him.

the mouth of Job's closest earthly companion and friend must have hit their mark. The pain would have been devastating. And the words of Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar<sup>13</sup> would not have helped either. They accused Job of sin and surmised that those unrighteous actions led to his present experience of suffering as part of the judgment of God. According to them, he was getting what he deserved. These friends that came to crisis intending to be a source of help actually could have become a problem had Job given into their human reasoning. They actually were *miserable comforters*, 16.2.

Instead of giving up, Job held fast his integrity. *I know that I am right. Can anyone indict me? How many iniquities and sins have I committed?*<sup>14</sup> In chapter 23 he goes on to say:

Yet he knows the way I have taken; when he has tested me, I will emerge as pure gold. My feet have followed in his tracks; I have kept to his way and not turned aside. I have not departed from the commands from his lips; I have treasured the words from his mouth more than my daily food.

– Job 23.10-12

It is obvious that Job refused to allow all the setbacks and condemning words dissuade his trust and reliance upon God. He did not understand the *why* but waited in patience for the delivering hand of God.

### ***Negative self-talk***

Every person every day has a running commentary going through his or her mind that we often refer to as self-talk. It especially seems to come out during times of struggle and failure. We may say to ourselves:

- *You'll never be good enough.*
- *You'll never get past this one sin that continually trips you up.*
- *Everyone thinks you a failure.*

When these thoughts invade, we must make an immediate decision to resist and see these statements in light of the source they are coming from. They certainly emanate from darkness and are full of untruth. God, through His Spirit instructs us to:

Finally brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable—if there is any moral excellence and if there is anything praiseworthy—dwell on these things.

– Philippians 4.8

Negative self-talk does not have its origin in heavenly wisdom.

But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peace-loving, gentle, compliant, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without pretense.

– James 3.17

---

<sup>13</sup> See Job 4.7-9; 8.5-6; 11.13-15.

<sup>14</sup> See Job 13.18b-19a; 23.



3. To what extreme did some go in the Restoration Movement on responding to Calvinism?
4. How is this teaching contrary to Scripture?
5. How do you think these views impacted our beliefs on providence?
6. What are some passages you can find that describe God's readiness to help?
7. How does Scripture describe the power of the tongue?
8. How did Job experience this power by the actions of others?
9. What is negative self-talk? How can we fight back against it?
10. How can you learn to trust God one day at a time?
11. How can you increase your diligence in waiting on the Lord?