



TABOO

Taboo Series Part 1

October 1, 2023

The Apostle Paul's Second Letter to the Church at Corinth:

2 Corinthians 1:6-11, ⁶“If we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; and if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which you experience when you patiently endure the same sufferings that we suffer. ⁷ Our hope for you is unshaken, for we know that as you share in our sufferings, you will also share in our comfort. ⁸ For we do not want you to be unaware, brothers, of the affliction we experienced in Asia. For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself. ⁹ Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the

dead. ¹⁰ He delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us.

On him we have set our hope that he will deliver us again.”

May the Lord add His Blessing to the Reading and the Hearing of His Word Today, in Jesus Name! Amen!

Have you ever noticed how experiences in life have a way of revealing characteristics about God that perhaps you never knew? I have always found it to be quite profound how the nation of Israel throughout the Old Testament discerned different aspects of the character and nature of God based upon the difficulty or circumstance that they were navigating

For example, the term “Jehovah - Jireh”; Jehovah Jireh in Hebrew interprets to say “The LORD will provide.” And it was this unveiling of the character of God found in Genesis 22 that allowed Abraham to truly learn something about God that he had known before; that God will provide in the midst of great difficult or trial.

In Genesis 22:13-14, the scripture reads as thus "And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son. And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-Jireh...”

God had asked Abraham to offer his own son as a sacrifice; the Son of Promise born from a barren womb was to be killed and burned. But God provided in the midst of this painful trial thus saving the son.

Therefore, it would be easy to surmise that in light of this record of Abraham's life, it was made clear that the Will of God can be a painful thing; His will is not always easy nor painless. So with that said, Point #1...

1. The Difficulties of Life give Us Commonality as Followers of Jesus!

- a. Church, it is the difficulties of life that tend to be the most defining of the characteristics of the God that we serve! For example, I would have never known that God was a way maker had I not found myself in a place where there seemed to be no way out.
- b. I would have never known him as a healer had I not suffered through some seasons of my life; whether it be physically, emotionally, spiritually, or even mentally.
- c. I would have never gained the revelation and insight of Abraham to know God as Jehovah Jireh had I not found myself at a point in my life where if God did not provide, everything was going to fall apart. Perhaps we have to walk through the fiery trials of Hell to realize that Heaven was working on our behalf the whole time.

- d. And many of you in this room can attest to the fact that there were seasons in your life, and perhaps even the current season that you are in, that were and are painful.
- e. And to compound this frustration; you know that in spite of the pain you experienced in THAT season or THAT experience itself was the will of God for your life.
- f. Though it was painful, though it was ridden with emotional turmoil, though you suffered through the pain of loss, though you suffered through the frustration of people leaving your life, or things simply happened that did not make sense or beyond your control. Far too often we begin our rebuttals with, “but I...” however, what if we replaced that phrase with, “But God...”
- g. Church family, now that you are past those moments in your life, you can look back and say, “The pain was worth THAT season.” Many of you would have never known just how strong you are had you not walked through THAT season. Many of you would have never grown to the place that you find yourself at now had you not walked through THAT season.
- h. And I can attest to the fact, though I can’t speak for you, I can only speak for myself; I would not be the man that I am today had I not walked through the misery of my yesterday.

- i. Far too often the modern message of Christianity is blessings and miracles but the reality of the scripture is a balance between the two: blessings and burdens. Salvation and Sacrifice.
- j. But not only do our difficulties of life give us commonality, point #2...

2. The Fight inside our Minds gives us all Commonality as Followers of Jesus!

- a. Anxiety and Depression are nothing new and, friends, just because you struggle with anxiety or depression or perhaps you are navigating a season or obstacle with mental illness; family, these difficulties do not mean that you have a demon nor that you are not loved by Christ!
- b. Take the story of Elijah for example: Brings Revival to a Nation and then runs to the Dessert and begs God to kill him over a death threat from an evil queen... Our lives, like Elijah, are full of great heights and deep depths...
- c. Take the story of Christ: Knowing that betrayal, the whipping post, the cross is coming; however, we find Christ in the garden of Gethsemane sweating blood due to the mental and emotional distress of the cup that was placed before Him.

- d. Church, emotional and mental distress can drive us to have thoughts we never want to admit we've had, to have feelings we never imagined that we would experience, and to have urges that we know that are counter to who we are as a person. And to not stop there, distress, fear, anxiety, depression, grief can drive you to a place of not wanting to live anymore.
- e. Speak to Suicide and suicidal thoughts (gentle) (funeral examples)
- f. On Wednesday, October 18, 2017 at 6:40pm I received a text message that changed my life forever... Tell The Story...
- g. Church, asking for help doesn't make you weak; it makes you smart. Admitting there is an issue that needs resolution is strength, it is not an admittance to weakness.
- h. Friends, there is no where I the scripture where it prohibits the use of medication in dealing with issues of our health
- i. Paul instructed Timothy to take a little wine for his stomach sake because of his ailments.
 - ii. And furthermore, if Christ had an issue with physicians then why did He call Luke unto Himself whom was a physician.
 - iii. The Great Physicians believes in Physicians

- i. For the mother who is navigating a season of post-partum depression or the woman who is later in life navigating changes within your body, seeking help or counseling or visiting your doctor does not make you of lesser faith.
- j. Church, it is our struggles that unite us as much as our faith does as followers of Christ! (Combat veteran story)
- k. but not only does the fight inside our minds give us commonality, point #3...

3. The Struggles of Our Faith gives Us Commonality as Followers of Jesus!

- a. Friends, there have been times where I have prayed and nothing happened...
- b. There have been times through tears I have begged Christ concerning a matter and nothing happened...
- c. There have been seasons where I would quote the text that He sticketh closer than a brother and yet in the midst of decreeing that I was the most alone I had ever been in my life...
- d. Friends, life is hard. It is simply hard. It's hard to walk in faith. It's hard to walk in unity. It's hard to fight Fear. It's hard to navigate grief and loss and trauma. It's hard to maintain a place of peace in our minds.

e. Church family, life is hard. It's hard to navigate stress. It's hard to see past the forest to see the trees and vice versa. It's hard to walk in forgiveness. It's hard to admit when we are struggling. It's hard. It's hard to own when we were wrong. It's hard to take ownership of the messes that we've made. Nothing about life is easy and no one gets out alive. But may we all today be reminded, as well as myself, of the words of Peter in this text...

1 Peter 1:6-9, “⁶In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.⁸ Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, ⁹obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.”

Altar Time