

Take Ground part 5

Persevering

The word middle simply means, "Being neither at the beginning nor the ending of a series."

When we feel like no one understands us...we look to the Bible and the heroes of our faith!
we see the miracles that happened in their lives...and we wonder why we don't get our own miracle.

Yes, the Bible is FULL of miracles...but it is also FULL of stories of people who too had a middle in their story...they too were waiting for their miracle.

-**Daniel**, on that cold long night of sitting in the lion's den. Not knowing when or if the lions would open their mouths and devour him.

His middle.

-**Joseph**, on that day that his brothers sold him into slavery...not knowing what was going to happen.

His middle.

-**Moses**, standing on the shore of the Red Sea watching the Egyptians coming at them with everything they had, no way of escape.

His middle.

Persevere means, "to keep at something in spite of difficulties, opposition, or discouragement."

So how do you persevere in the middle when...

1. Your miracle is **delayed**
2. You've been **duped**
3. You must **do** something

1. Your miracle is delayed: **Daniel 6**

One of the most famous miracles in the Bible!

-He had to wait for his miracle...stuck in his middle

-ALL because he did the right thing and there was a consequence

King Darius LOVED Daniel and respected him greatly

-Daniel acquired many rivals among the King's officials

-They tricked King Darius into issuing a decree for thirty days...

NO prayers should be addressed to any God or man
ONLY to King Darius himself!!

Daniel did not adhere to this law
-He was thrown into the lion's den

God shuts the mouths of the lions!!!

Let's go back to the middle of his story...what if we had a chance to talk to Daniel?

Mark Batterson, in his book, "Draw the Circle" says this

"Waiting is part of praying, and praying is a form of waiting. Waiting doesn't delay God's plans and purposes".-Mark Batterson

He already knows the plan!!!

So how should you persevere in your middle when your miracle is delayed?

-WAIT for God to show up!

2. How to persevere in your middle when you've been duped: **Genesis 37-50**

When you're stuck in the middle of your story because of someone else

Joseph was one of the twelve sons of Jacob.

-He was the favorite child

-His brothers get jealous and plot to kill him

They decide to sell Joseph...he was taken to Egypt

1. He was thrown in jail
2. He stayed close to God.
3. He became the 2nd in command over all of Egypt.

Pharaoh had a dream that no one could interpret

-So they bring Joseph before Pharaoh

Joseph, with the help of God, interprets the dream!

Persevering in our middle

-We depend on the Lord for our wisdom

-NOT our own understanding.

Eventually, Joseph's brothers went to Pharaoh for food and were brought to Joseph!

Gen 50:20-21, "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. So then, don't be afraid. I will provide for you and your children." And he reassured them and spoke kindly to them."

Through all of the hateful things that Joseph's bros did, God used it to save a nation from starvation.

He's always at work in your middle!

So how can we be persistent in our middle when we are duped?

-We must learn to forgive and let God work it all out on our behalf.

-Trust that He has a plan and is working it all out for good.

Through the famine, Joseph's father Jacob and bros ended up moving to Egypt.

Gen 47:5-6

"Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Your father and your brothers have come to you, and the land of Egypt is before you; settle your father and your brothers in the best part of the land. Let them live in Goshen."

Sweet story right?

There was still a famine going on!

They ended up having to do what they had to do to get food.

Genesis 47:19-20, *“Why should we perish before your eyes—we and our land as well? Buy us and our land in exchange for food, and we with our land will be in bondage to Pharaoh. Give us seed so that we may live and not die, and that the land may not become desolate.” So Joseph bought all the land in Egypt for Pharaoh. The Egyptians, one and all, sold their fields, because the famine was too severe for them. **The land became Pharaoh’s,**”*

Have you ever wondered why the Israelites became slaves in Egypt?

Exodus 1:8-11 *“Then a new king who did not know about Joseph, came to power over Egypt. He said to his people, “Look at the Israelite people, more numerous and stronger than we are! Come, let’s deal wisely with them. Otherwise, they will continue to multiply, and if a war breaks out, they will ally themselves with our enemies and fight against us and leave the country...So they put foremen over the Israelites to oppress them with hard labor.”*

Never think that our decisions don’t matter...especially the ones made in anger and jealousy.

As Christians, we MUST persevere in our middle to not live offended.

Proverbs 19:11 says, *“Good sense makes one slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense.”*

3. How to persevere in your middle when there’s something you must do.

Exodus chapters 8-14

The Israelites captivity

After much pleading from Moses and a very strong persuasion from God

-Pharaoh has a change of heart and allows Moses to lead the Israelites out of captivity...out of Egypt.

Plot twist!!

Pharaoh rounds up his men and his chariots and begins the BIG CHASE.

Moses is stuck in his middle. He tells the people,

Exodus 14:13-14, *“Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the Lord will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. The Lord will fight for you; **you need only to be still.**”*

But listen to what God says in the very next verse,
Exodus 14:15 *“Then the Lord said to Moses, “Why are you crying out to me? Tell the Israelites to move on!”*

Don't just stand there! RUN!!

There are times to wait in your middle and there are times to MOVE in your middle.

ALWAYS depend on God for our wisdom...asking Him what the next step is.

Should we wait? Should we run? Should we be still? Should we move?
What do you want me to do God?

The middle is HARD! **To have a miracle you must have a middle!**

Sometimes the report is horrible. Trust
Sometimes you feel like all is lost. Trust
Sometimes it feels like nothing will be good again. Trust.

God is good...in the middle
God is with us...in the middle
God's got a plan...in the middle
Persevere in your middle!

LOOK FOR MIRACLES IN YOUR MIDDLE!

He is MORE than able in your middle

TRUST. He's got you in your middle
Are you stuck? Are you in the middle of something and you need a miracle?

You're in good company!
Daniel, Moses, Joseph...even Jesus!
Talk about a middle as He hung on the cross.

You're in a place where God can and WILL show up.

Have faith God is in the middle! Trust Him!

You can't have the miracle without the middle.