

12-3-2011, COTR Texarkana

Title: Muddy Boots

Purpose: Provoke people to deal with disappointment in a Biblical way.

Spiritual Truth: God can help us get the mud of disappointment off our boots.

Text: Pr 15:13

Topic: Disappointment, Discouragement, Christmas, Rest

Muddy Boots

I. Introduction

A. Video: A Christmas Story

1. It's pretty disappointing when Santa says you can't have what you want for Christmas. Disappointment over a an official Red Ryder, carbine action, 200 shot BB gun is funny but when you get disappointed in real life it can be devastating.
2. Disappointment can be especially difficult during the holidays. We know how our life should be but it's not. We know how we want our life to be and when it's not it's easy to get discouraged.

B. Christmas is filled with expectations. We expect certain gifts; we have expectations from family to do certain things; we have financial needs we expect to be met...but sometimes these expectations aren't met and we get disappointed. Disappointment is a part of life but it can be especially hard for Christians when we expect God to do something for us and nothing happens.

1. Def disappointment: to be down, sad or unhappy because of what's going on.
2. Disappointment can be like walking through gumbo mud. It sticks to our boots and grows. **Picture/ Boots.** Soon our feet are so heavy we can't walk. Similarly, disappointment can grow into depression and then we've got a real problem.
3. It gets worse when we get disappointed in God because we feel He let us down.
 - a. It is hard to reconcile:
 - i. God is a good, all powerful God.
 - ii. The rain falls on the just and unjust, i.e. good people have problems.
 - iii. The devil's tries to kill, steal and destroy us; sometimes he succeeds.When he does we get disappointed.

C. Pr 15:13 (NIV) A happy heart makes the face cheerful, but **heartache crushes the spirit.**

1. Personal example: a couple weeks ago a got disappointed over something you'd think was silly. I got disappointed; I felt God let me down.

D. Title: Muddy Boots

E. Purpose: Provoke people to deal with disappointment in a Biblical way.

F. Spiritual Truth: God can help us get the mud of disappointment off our boots.

G. Today we'll look in the Bible and see 3 ways we can get the mud of disappointment off our boots?

II. Rest: It's hard to cope with disappointment when you're tired and stressed.

A. Exodus 23:12 (NCV)

¹² "You should work six days a week, but **on the seventh day you must rest.** This lets your ox and your donkey rest, and it also lets the slave born in your house and the foreigner be **refreshed.**

1. Def refreshed: get our strength back; restore our energy

2. Exodus 31:17 (ESV) [The Sabbath day of rest]
¹⁷ ... in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and **on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed.**’ ”
 3. Sometimes the most spiritual thing you can do is to go to bed or take some time off! When we're refreshed we'll be creative and productive again.
- B. God did not design us to work like a machine that runs 24/7.** The rhythm of life should be work and rest. Work and take time off. Get a good night's sleep. We are not the 'Every ready bunny'. God didn't design us to keep going and going.
1. The more tired I am the harder it is to handle disappointment. The more emotionally taxing my life is the more I need to rest.
 2. I'm learning about the value of taking a Sabbatical ,i.e. an extended time of rest.
- C. America is a stressful place.** Most of us work 40+ hours and chase kids for the next 40. Our lives are complicated; our "To Do" list grows longer and never gets completed. Technology drives us harder, e.g. my phone dings throughout the night with texts, Face book and emails.
1. God's solution is rest to get refreshed so we can get the mud off our boots.

III. Make a fresh connection with God

A. 1 Samuel 30:3-8 (NCV)

³ When David and his men came to Ziklag, they found the town had been burned and their wives, sons, and daughters had been taken as prisoners. ⁴ Then David and his army cried loudly until they were too weak to cry anymore... ⁶ The men in the army were threatening to kill David with stones, which greatly upset David... **but David found strength in the LORD his God, (KJV David encouraged himself in the LORD)**... ⁸ Then David asked the LORD, "Should I chase the people who took our families?...The LORD answered, "Chase them. You will catch them, and you will succeed in saving your families."

1. David was disappointed like everybody else. They got depressed but David got closer to God. Then he was able to go get his family back. What would have happened if disappointment and turned into depression and David hadn't found strength to keep going?
2. Imagine if everybody you loved was kidnapped; everything you owned was stolen and all your friends wanted to kill you. How would you feel?
3. There was nothing in David's world that could take the disappointment away **BUT GOD.** That was enough.

B. David found strength to overcome disappointment through God.

The very nature of God is to give life, strength and hope to those who get close to Him.

1. Psalm 16:11 (ESV) **You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy...**
2. 2 Corinthians 3:17 (ESV) **...where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.**
3. Acts 2:28 (NCV)...**Being with you will fill me with joy.'**

C. God promises when we move closer to Him, He'll move closer to us.

1. James 4:8 (NLT) **Come close to God, and God will come close to you...**
2. How do we "come close to God"?
 - a. It could be as simple opening your Bible or coming to the altar for prayer.
 - b. It might require a fast or going to a conference.
 - c. It might mean changing how you pray. Instead of begging God, start thanking Him for what's He has done and what He'll do.

D. Casual seekers may not encounter God but deliberate people will.

1. Jeremiah 29:11-14 (The Message)

¹¹ I know what I'm doing. I have it all planned out—plans to take care of you, not abandon you, plans to give you the future you hope for. ¹² “When you call on me, when you come and pray to me, I'll listen. ¹³ “When you come looking for me, you'll find me. “Yes, **when you get serious about finding me and want it more than anything else,** ¹⁴ **I'll make sure you won't be disappointed.**” ... “I'll turn things around for you.

IV. Connect with the right people

A. The right person will make your struggle with disappointment easier; the wrong person will make it worse. The wrong people will say “let's get drunk”. The right people will say “Let me pray for you”. The wrong people will say “you might as well quit, it's impossible. The right people will say “God can turn anything around. Don't quit”.

1. 2 Corinthians 7:5-6 (NLT)

⁵ ... in Macedonia there was no rest for us. We faced conflict from every direction, with battles on the outside and fear on the inside. ⁶ But **God, who encourages those who are discouraged, encouraged us by the arrival of Titus.**

2. People full of God's Spirit help us find God in the midst of our problems. Christians who are close to God will rub off on you. They're like a tow truck that tows you to the gas station to get your tank full. Sometimes they'll have good advice and sometimes just being around them makes you feel better even if they don't know what to do.
3. The right person will help you get the mud off your boots; the wrong person will make things worse. E.g. maybe you're depressed because of an unwanted pregnancy. If you get advice from someone who has had 4-5 abortions they'll take you to the clinic. If you get advice from a Spirit filled person they'll bring you by the church and people will love you and the baby.
 - a. When I'm discouraged I want to be around a godly person who'll help me climb out of the hole. That's why the Bible tells us to...
 - b. Hebrews 10:25 (NCV)
²⁵ You should not stay away from the church meetings, as some are doing, but **you should meet together and encourage each other...**

V. Conclusion

A. Psalm 42:5-8 (NLT)

⁵ **Why am I discouraged?** Why is my heart so sad? **I will put my hope in God!** I will praise him again— my Savior and ⁶ my God! Now I am deeply discouraged, but I will remember you... ⁸ But each day the LORD pours his unfailing love upon me, and through each night I sing his songs, praying to God who gives me life.

B. Summary: when your boots are muddy with disappointment:

1. Get some rest...Reconnect with God...Connect with the right people...
 - a. and I promise you that that your struggle with disappointment will be easier to deal with and won't last as long.

VI. Response

A. Prayer: What is the Holy Spirit saying to you?

B. Souls