

# “Keeping Tied To Christ When Life Leaves You Frazzled”

## Saturday Afternoon Lesson

Want to start out this afternoon and share a little story that fit so well with this lesson.

Loose string/button story from Beta.

Thinking of this and our topic of hot buttons it just seemed to fit. There are time in life when we just pop! We are at the end of our string, our rope, hanging on to that last straw and something sets us over the edge. Whether it is something that makes us...

angry, guilty, lonely, fearful, sorrowful, makes us worry, stress, raises our anxiety, leaves us in shame or in envy of another, these are moments when we really need to know God and how He expects us to handle these “hot button” issues in our life.

God's word is so deep with help for us, but do we really dig down deep into it for do we skim across the top looking for that one verse that will make everything seem ok.

Peter opens up his second letter telling us that...

“Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, 3 as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue,” (2 *Peter 1:2-3*)

### **Do we really believe that?**

Do we really trust that God doesn't just speak to our life eternally but to how we are to actually live in this life?

Helps us know how we are deal with relationships, with stresses, with problems, with both the good and the bad that come our way here on earth?

### **Do we really believe that God's word is living and powerful?**

“For the word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” *Hebrews 4:12*

*Or that is is profitable for us.....*

**2 Timothy 3:16-17** “All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

### **But how do we use it?**

- Since the beginning of the Lord's church, it has been a place where people could turn for help.
- Not just with physical needs like food, shelter or clothing.
- But for help with their emotional and spiritual problems.
- Unfortunately today many people, even Christians, do not look to God for help with those problems. Outside help is sought, counselors who are not based in the Book,

psychologists whose very basis were from a standpoint of belief that God did not exist.

- We need to remember that God has given us the tools we need to find His help and He has surrounded us with His church to guide us and lead us to that help.

Let me go ahead and say this, much of this lesson has come from a series of lessons that Nick has been doing at Three Forks called **Practical Theology**. He has been picking a topic and showing the way to find help in dealing with it through scripture. It has been very enlightening, but wanting to squeeze so much of a few months of lessons into one 45 min class is going to be impossible. But I hope I will be able to cover some things that will be of some benefit.

When it comes to this life, what is something most all of us desire? **Is it not peace?** I know as a mom it is just a few minutes of “peace and quiet”.

But in this world, are we ever going to find real and lasting peace?

No, we are not, sin has made sure that true peace is not here, true peace will only be found in God.

**Romans 8:6**, a verse we looked at last night says, “*For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.*”

**Life and peace**, the things we desire, we seek out, we want for ourselves and our families. We all have a desire to live, and we want to live in peace with those around us.

- If we are living for this world we will not find what is only found in the spirit.
- What does this physical life give us?

\* Arguments, dirty dishes, sadness, anger, depression, loss of friendship, death, we know all these and so many more.

- But how do we deal with it? How to not let it wear us down and burn us out?
- Look for example at what Paul wrote...

**2 Cor. 4:7-10** “ *But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. 8 We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; 9 persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed— 10 always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.*”

What is this treasure Paul has that can get him through those tough times?

- A treasure where that helps him be hard-pressed but not crushed
- perplexed but not in despair
- persecuted but not forsaken
- struck down not destroyed

How many of us have felt these things?

Hard pressed by the requirements and responsibilities of life?

Perplexed at the right choice to make, path to take?

Persecuted for a position we hold or a belief we keep?

Struck down to our knees where we don't know how we can get back up?

**What did Paul have that allowed him to endure all he went through and keep this attitude?**

This was a man who walked away from that would have been the “it life”

- only student of the best teacher of the Jewish culture
- family of high status
- money
- power
- Everything the world would deem as what is required for a good life.

And he left it, more than that in

**Phil. 3:8 he says,** *“Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ.”*

(Other versions translate that as dung, garbage, sewer trash, you get the picture.)

The point is, he wasn't worried about what he lost, but he traded it all for what?

- His own imprisonment
- beatings
- stonings
- a shipwreck
- snakebite
- rejection
- more suffering than most of us will ever have to endure. Yet he wasn't crush.

What allowed him to sit in a jail cell with Silas, chained to the floor, in conditions I don't want to imagine, and sing praises?

**He had hope through the death and resurrection of Jesus!**

He said in **Romans 8:18**, “For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”

How powerful is that hope?

How strong was his relationship to be able to endure the things that would bring most anyone to their knees? That is what we can have too.

**He had a relationship with God that would see Him through those moments of pain and distress.**

- He had knowledge from God to instruct him how to live through the rest of His life.
- We are lucky that we have God's word recorded so we can have what Paul had!
- We can have the knowledge and the relationship that can see us through those button pushing times too!

Let's look into that word at The Word who is our greatest example of how to live. **Let's look at Jesus, himself, for examples on dealing with life's hard moments.**

He shows us how to handle the things in life take the wind from us, and push our buttons until we are ready to explode.

Look at how Jesus handles...

## Temptation?

This can be a big hot button issue. And it is an issue that is different for each one of us. Something that tempts me may not be something that tempts you. A **cigarette** to me would be nothing, but to someone trying to quit smoking it would be a big deal.

The latter part of **Hebrews 4:15** tells us that Jesus was, “*in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.*” How did he endure what we often can not and remain the perfect, sinless, Son of God?

How did Jesus combat every weapon Satan threw at Him when He was tempted in the Wilderness? In **Matthew 4**, after fasting for 40 days and nights He was tempted by Satan directly.

(**And Can I just say**, here I think is record of the most understated comment ever.

- It says in verse 2, “And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry.”
- Yeah, I'd say He certainly was. Also note that it was when He was at His weakest physically when Satan tempted Him spiritually.
- Not something we should over look because Satan waits for our weak moments physically to attack us as well. When we are the most vulnerable.
- Yet with all this against Him, Jesus answered the father of all lies each time with “**It is written.**”
- **We are not going to survive this world with our sanity and souls intact without a knowledge of God's word that is deep enough to carry us through each difficult moment.**
- We must be constant students of His word so we have the tools available when we are faced with the hot buttons of temptation in our lives.

## Making Important Decisions

We all have big decisions that have to be made from time to time.

- Whether to take a job, to make a move?
- To help when it could leave us hurting?
- Decisions that weigh heavy and cause us grief and worry. Maybe with ailing family members or struggling friends.
- Jesus too had tough decisions. How did He handle it?

In **Luke 8**, before choosing His 12 apostles, **He prayed.**

**vs. 12** says “*Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.*”

Continued all night in prayer. And in **vs 13** when it was morning he called them together and made his choices.

If we want to make it through this life that weighs us down with worry and cares, with decisions that are not easy, we must follow His example and be willing, all night if it takes it, to turn those things over to the Father.

Philippians 4:6-7 says, “**Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer** and supplication, with thanksgiving, **let your requests be made known to God;** 7 and the **peace of God**, which surpasses all understanding, **will guard your hearts and minds** through Christ Jesus. ”

God doesn't want us to be anxious but doesn't deny we will be, but wants us to turn ever situation over to Him.

Only when we can do this will we have what **verse 7 promises**, that the **peace of God** will guard our hearts and minds.

There is that peace again, found when we turn things over to God in prayer and trust them to Him.

His shoulders are bigger than ours and He can carry our loads so much better than us. We have to learn to pray about those decisions and not worry ourselves with the “what ifs” and the second guessing.

## **Grief/Sorrow/Death of A Loved One**

This can hit us at any time, we can lose someone, or have lost someone and the memory can come back to hurt us when certain buttons are pushed in our lives.

**Jesus experienced loss in His life**, just as we face it in ours. He lost dear friends and probably even His earthly father (Joseph is no longer mentioned toward the end of Jesus' life, and since Jesus has John take care of Mary, seems Joseph is not there to do it.)

**He came here to experience life, and part of life for all of us is death.** We have to deal with the pain of losing family and friends.

In **Matthew 14** there is the account of the death of John the baptist. A close friend and cousin of Jesus. When the disciples told Him the news what did He do?

**vs. 13** *“When Jesus heard it, He departed from there by boat to a deserted place by Himself.”*

Sometimes we need solitude. Sometimes we need to be alone, to think, to cry, to pray. Jesus, the Son of God, had times when He needed to be around people, and times when He needed to be alone, to recover from His pain. Do we take time for ourselves to heal and recover, silence and solitude can be great medicine.

David wrote in **Psalm 34:18** “The Lord *is* near to those who have a broken heart, And saves such as have a contrite spirit.”

It is in those moments when we are alone with God that we can heal, freed from the distractions of the world.

But I can't take time to be alone, what about all my...

## **Stress and responsibilities?**

In that same chapter, Jesus is being pressed, more and more people are demanding His time and His energy.

He has just fed the huge crowd of 5000+, no doubt the mental strain of trying to responsible for that many people was weighing on Him.

And again what did He do?

**Matthew 14:23** *“And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. Now when evening came, He was alone there.”*

**Jesus again sought some quiet time alone.**

- As women, we are pressed most hours of the day by responsibilities.
- Husbands, kids, jobs, families, parents, to-do lists, projects.
- The million and one things that we have to do that take a little bit of our attention here, a little there.
- We spread ourselves thin trying to get it all done then what is left for us?
- Do we take the time for ourselves to regroup and unwind or do we barely have enough energy to

throw on our pj's and fall into bed hoping our list of tomorrow's "to-do" don't keep us from falling asleep?

### **Our bodies and our minds need time to rest and recharge.**

Our bodies have **stress chemicals, cortisol**. You have probably heard that word on commercials for those belly fat products. They talk about belly fat produced by stress.

That chemical is good in certain doses. It is what starts the **fight or flight ability** in our bodies when there is trouble. Helps us to produce **adrenaline** if we need it to escape danger.

When we rest that chemical that has built up is able to dissipate and our stress levels return to normal.

But when we don't rest that chemical doesn't get a chance to go away, it stays there for the next day. Then that days stresses builds up on top of it and it grows some more grows.

Our bodies become like **stretched out rubber bands** and what eventually happens?

SNAP!

### **Yep, we snap, that button flies off.**

- We get upset, we may yell, we may cry, whatever our outlet is, we break loose,
- and if you are like me, when it happens, and it is all over, instead of feeling better, relieved to have let that stress out, what do you feel?
- Defeated? Upset? Disappointed because of how you may have acted, what you may have said or done, usually to some one close to you who happened to be at the wrong place at the wrong time.

**We need downtime.** We need to be like Jesus and take time for ourselves.

His life was an example in not just Christian, godly behavior, but in **life management!**

Helping us to live our lives, not for our lives to tear us down.

**This was not a one time thing with Him.** Even though His time on this earth was limited and the demands on His time and presence were high, **Luke 5:16** tells us,

*"So He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed."*

**Jesus knew the best way for Him to be able to help those who needed His help was to make sure He was taking the time for His own care, physically and spiritually.**

When we take time to care for ourselves then we will have the strength (physically, emotionally, spiritually) to care for those around us who are depending on us.

### **What can we do?**

- Get plenty of rest
- take breaks
- read a book
- close your eyes and take deep breaths
- color with you kids/grandkids (or by yourself)
- take a walk
- anything that helps you unwind

### **Jesus told us in Matthew 1:28-29**

*"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take My yoke upon you*

*and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls”*

Doesn't this sound like us, burdened and heavy laden?

Doesn't this sound like what we want? Rest for our souls?

Then What did He tell us to do? **To learn from Him. Learn all things from Him!** He came to teach us!

## **When Facing Difficult Times**

Jesus knew there was a need to be alone, but He also when times are tough, **you need a support system.** You need to surround yourself with close people you can trust to help you through it.

Before His crucifixion, a big and no doubt very scary and stressful time for our Lord, He called together His three closest friends to be with Him in His time of pain.

**Matthew 26:36-38** ” Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples, “Sit here while I go and pray over there.” <sup>37</sup> And **He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee**, and He began to be **sorrowful and deeply distressed**. <sup>38</sup> Then He said to them, “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. **Stay here and watch with Me.**”

**We need our friends and family in times of sorrow and distress.**

Just as much as we need to make sure we are taking time to grieve and cling to God, We need people we can depend on who will “stay here and watch with us.”

Sometimes not to say a word, just to be with us, be near us, comfort us with their presence.

In the **book of Job**, when he was facing all the loss and despair, his friends came to his side. These friends are often given a bad rap for their bad advice but look before that,

**Job 2:11-13** “*Now when Job’s three friends heard of all this adversity that had come upon him, each one came from his own place—Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite. For they had made an appointment together to come and mourn with him, and to comfort him. 12 And when they raised their eyes from afar, and did not recognize him, they lifted their voices and wept; and each one tore his robe and sprinkled dust on his head toward heaven. 13 So they sat down with him on the ground seven days and seven nights, and no one spoke a word to him, for they saw that his grief was very great.*”

They came in his time of need and **for a whole week all they did was sit by his side to comfort him**, to be with him. For all their bad advice, their heart was in the right place. They wanted to be there for their friend.

**Ecc. 4:9-10** says,

“Two *are* better than one,

Because they have a good reward for their labor.

**10 For if they fall, one will lift up his companion.**

But woe to him *who is* alone when he falls,

For *he has* no one to help him up.

We need people who we can trust to lift us up when we fall, when we are being pushed to the breaking point,

and we need to be the person that can be there for others when they are in need of being picked up.

## **When We Are Afraid?**

Now Jesus, himself doesn't appear afraid in anything He encountered on this earth,

But we can look to Him still in how to handle fear.

In **Mark 4:35-41** we have an incident with Jesus and His apostles in the boat where they are afraid of the storm.

*“On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, “Let us cross over to the other side.” 36 Now when they had left the multitude, they took Him along in the boat as He was. And other little boats were also with Him. 37 And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling. 38 But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, “Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?”*

*39 Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “Peace, be still!” And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. 40 But He said to them, “Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?” 41 And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, “Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!”*

This was right after seeing Jesus heal multitudes of people, of hearing some wonder parables, they go to cross the sea the they run into a storm. That is when the fear hits.

Remember,

- at least a few of these men were fishermen by trade, they knew the sea & its storms
- They have the Son of God in the very boat with them!
- Yet their fear consumes them and they can't see it.

Fear is like that, if we aren't careful it consumes us, they feared for their life, They didn't stop to think of what it would mean for the Son of God to perish at sea or how unlikely that would be, fear only allowed them to see the danger right in front of them and they couldn't see beyond it.

- Fear is **False Evidence Appearing Real**

They were afraid of what they perceived as real danger, not what reality told them.

Truth is, when fear grabs a hold of us it is hard to let go. **It becomes consuming** and everything else is then processed through that fear. But look at Jesus in this story.

Jesus has no fear of the storm, he is asleep on a pillow. He has the peace of God that this world can't steal. And when they wake Him from that sleep what does He say?

“Why are you so fearful? How *is it* that you have no faith?” He asked where their faith was?

When we fear we lose our faith. Satan tries to steal it from us and replace it with something that will not lead us to God.

But notice, through Jesus rebuked them for their lack of faith, for not being able to see they were safe as long as they were with Jesus, no matter how stormy life got around them,

**He never left them. He didn't give up on them.** He acknowledged that they were afraid but he told them to replace that fear with faith.

2 Timothy 1:7 says...

“For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.”

Living in fear takes away our power, love and our soundness of mind, it becomes all we can consider, but God has taken that from us and just as He promised Joshua, He promises us,

**Joshua 1:9** “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God *is* with you wherever you go.”

This message hasn't changed, look at the promise Jesus gave to the apostles who were still facing doubt

and fear before His ascension

**Matt. 28:18-20** “And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. **19** Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **20** teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age.” Amen.

- 1) He has all authority, we need to trust in Him
- 2) Teach them to observe all things, Stay in His word, use it in our lives.
- 3) I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age, He will never leave us. Just as He never left them!

There are so many more examples and verses we could bring out when considering all the “hot button” issues we face but the truth in handling them boils down to this...

**Prov. 3:5-6**

*“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; 6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.”*

The more we place our trust in God and turn our lives over to His will for us, the better equipped we will find ourselves to deal with the issues that appear in our lives.

The stresses of this life, the hurts, the problems are not going to go away, but the good thing to remember is neither is God!