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VOLUME 75 FEBRUARY 2013
KILLING SACRED COWS- THE BOOK OF JOB

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ! Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ our Lord!

Praise be unto God! He is opening doors that no one can shut and He is closing doors that no one can open! He is faithful!

Let me take a moment this month to update you with what has been happening in our personal lives...

As for Levi, he is growing up too fast. He is smart as a whip too! I think he can count as high as I can and he can also read well above his age's basic reading level. We received a prophecy recently concerning him that confirmed what Shannon and I already had in our heart- He is going to take the ministry we begin to new levels. And that is my heart's desire- to see God use him to further what we end up doing during the rest of our pilgrimage here. This is why I call Levi, "the disciple whom his daddy loves."

As for Shannon, she is in the preparation stage of our homeschooling of Levi. We are so thankful for our new house because the extra room was vital for the needs that come with homeschooling. So we are excited about training Him up in the ways of the Lord and filling his heart with the things that are necessary for him to be successful in life.

Shannon is also working on a class that she will be offering in the next few months that will focus on wellness for the whole man- both spiritually and physically. It will be a class that emphasizes personal training and exercise and will offer other insight on things such as nutrition. But what will make it different from other things like this that the world offers is that she will incorporate the spiritual component into her classes as well. In other words, she is going to talk about what the Bible teaches us as a means for experiencing wholeness, wellness, and happiness. We are very excited about this because this is something that Shannon is certainly qualified to lead and we believe those that sign up will experience more peace, joy, energy, and wholeness as a result. More info to come as we get closer to springtime.

As for me, I have had a recent change in my secular employment... I have received a promotion to go to another bank in the Macon area and we are so thankful for this open door that the Lord has given us. As many of you are aware of, God has given me great favor in the marketplace and I believe that the things that I have been learning, particularly over the past 5 years, are preparing me for certain aspects of ministry that are essential. He indeed works all things together for our good! Praise be unto His name!

Shannon prophesied at the end of 2012 that we are on our "journey to abundance." This is certainly

not for our glory, but so that we can show forth the glory of God everywhere we go. You know, God is glorified most when His children walk in His favor and His providence- spirit, soul, and body. It is His pleasure to see His children walk in His prosperity and then share with others out of the overflow that He has given. We will get into this again in a moment, but let's now move into what I had on my heart to share with you this month...

Last month, we discussed the subject of trust. We learned what trust is and we learned the key to developing trust in the Lord. This month, I want to move into a subject that ties in to the subject of trust because I feel that many out there have been erroneously indoctrinated in certain areas, and one of these subjects is with the Book of Job...

THE BOOK OF JOB

The Book of Job is, in my opinion, one of the most misunderstood books of the Bible. Many Christians have taken great comfort in his life of perseverance, but have not truly understood God's intention for recording his story in the Scriptures. Some, incorrectly, compare the tragedies and afflictions in their life to Job's in an attempt to make "biblical" their experiences. But what most of these well-meaning Christians fail to do is read the end of the story.

You see, although Job had some of the worst circumstances imaginable happen to him, he got twice as much back in the end of the story! Most fail to acknowledge that important point. In fact, the popular consensus is that his suffering and trials lasted less than a year! So what does that tell us? It tells us that if one is going to compare their life to Job, then their suffering will not go on for years and they can expect to receive twice as much in the end as they have lost. So, understanding this, when a brother in Christ comes to me saying, "Well, I am just suffering like Job did" my response will be- "Praise God brother! That means it is, number one, temporal, and, number two, God is going to repay you with twice as much as you have lost!" So enduring the trials of Job does not seem so terrible then, does it?

But the problem is with all of these that say they are enduring the same struggles of Job is that most of the time, they do not get healed, delivered, or receives the double portion that God gave him in the end. So, are they really suffering just like Job? Are they really suffering as he did? I tell you, an affirmative no! Just because someone is going through one (or several) of the many pains of life, does not mean that they are suffering for the Lord like Job because, if they are, God has shown us His willingness to redeem their life from destruction and restore to them a double portion of what they lost.

TAKING UP YOUR CROSS

Take the example that many use of Jesus saying that we are to "take up our cross and follow Him" for instance...

Many use this verse to substantiate an affliction in their life- calling that infirmity their cross to bear. This is simply incorrect theology as well because notice that Jesus said for us to "take up" our cross.

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In other words, it is a command to action, implying that it is up to us whether we take it up or lay it down. So if someone, for example, tells me that the wheelchair that they are confined to is their cross to bear, I would just simply ask them in love, "Can you then choose to lay it down if you so desire?" or "Can you prove that it is your cross by standing up and walking right now?" And, of course, they cannot- thus taking even the prospect that their physical condition is their so called "cross to bear" out of the picture because if we cannot choose it, then it is not a cross.

You see, Jesus chose to lay down His life on the cross. No one dictated it to Him. Therefore, taking up our cross and following Him is not the bad situations that might have entered into our life unexpectedly. And why? Because, again, we did not choose them! Therefore, taking up our cross is a decision we make just as it was for Jesus when He chose to lay down His life.

So then the question is: What did Jesus mean when He said to take up our cross and follow Him? Well, the first thing we need to ask is what does a cross represent? A cross represents death and suffering. So what Jesus was implying by us taking up our cross is that we need to die to ourselves. He was describing not the suffering of physical or emotional sickness; He was describing the suffering of not living our lives unto ourselves and bearing the pain of not getting our own way. And this is what is necessary in learning to follow Christ: It is the principle of Galatians 2:20- that we learn once we make Jesus our Lord and Savior that it is no longer we who live, but it is Christ living in and through us. It is the truth that once we become Christians, we are deemed dead to ourselves and we have committed to live our lives not for ourselves any longer but for the glory and will of God. And this, my friends, involves an element of suffering because we all would love to continue catering to the lusts of our flesh and our mind and it at times can be hard to lay aside our wants and desires.

No, brothers and sisters, laying down our carnal desires is our cross to bear! It is the laying down of our lives out of, first, our love for God and, secondly, our love for His creation. It is not (and I repeat, it is not!) suffering pain and death in our bodies and/or our families. This is not God's will for you- ever!

GOD IS NOT THE THIEF

So we should be able to clearly see in the example of Job's life that this was not God's will for him either. How? Because God was not the one who brought these calamities into Job's life- It was Satan!

You see, Satan is the thief, not God! Jesus revealed to us in John 10:10 that God is the author of life. That is why He sent us Jesus- to give us life and life more abundantly. The author of death is Satan. He is the one who steals, kills, and destroys, not God!

But someone will invariably say at this point- "Yeah, I agree that it was the devil who did these things to Job but God allowed these things to happen." (They bring this up seemingly fighting to hold on to their doctrine that God still wills these bad things to happen to us for some unseen purpose) But let me tell you- Satan is not God's "do boy." In other words, the devil is not working for God, either directly or indirectly. If that were the case, then God would be violating a spiritual principle that He

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said through His Son when Jesus said that any kingdom that operates against itself cannot stand. You see, if God were at one point using Satan for His purpose and then was fighting against him on the other hand, then God's kingdom could not stand. So it is impossible for God to be using Satan at one point and then fighting him at another.

Take a healing for instance... If God were using the devil to make someone sick and then was turning around and healing them, He would be operating against Himself. But this is what people unfortunately believe in much of the church today. They believe God is the author of all the bad things that happen in our lives and His purpose is to be glorified in us through the problems and the pain.

WHAT GLORIFIES GOD?

An example that often is used to teach this is in the story of the man who was born blind in John chapter 9... Do you remember when Jesus was asked who sinned that this man was born blind, responded-“Neither this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be revealed in him” (John 9:2-4)? Many have taught from this statement that some things happen to people-like, for instance, blindness because God is working His redemptive purpose in and through their lives. This is, in my biblical opinion, an absolute copout!

You see, it is easy to stay in the boat and claim that everything that happens is all a part of God's plan, but the truth is that God does not allow things like physical abnormalities, cancer, or any other damnable curse of this world to work out His plan and purpose! The truth is: We allowed it! We allowed these curses when we ate of the fruit in the garden and opened the door to the sin and the curse. All of these bad things that happen in people's lives are not, have not, nor ever will be a part of God's plan.

Another verse folks like to use to teach that God uses these things for His purposes is in the account of Lazarus in John chapter 11... In this story, when Jesus was told that Lazarus was sick, He responded-“This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it” (John 11:4). People have taught from this- “You see, the reason you are sick is because God wants you to glorify Him in your sickness.” Pardon my bluntness, but this is so dumb it's scary!

You see, in both of these examples from the Gospel of John, Jesus was not teaching that God uses sicknesses and infirmities to work something in us, nor was He saying that through these things that God is glorified. No, in both of these examples what the working of God was and what brought the Lord glory were the miracles that would be accomplished in both the blind man and in Lazarus! So, just as was the case with Job, the healing, deliverance, and provision was what glorified God, not the sickness!

Now certainly, if we are sick or are going through some other difficult circumstance, we can certainly bring God glory through operating in faith, hope, joy, and peace. This will be a great testimony to those around us. But what the Bible teaches us glorifies God the most is when we survive the Lion's den, when we are delivered from the fiery furnace, and when we receive our healing. This is what our Beloved Savior taught us brings glory to the Father!

WHY DO BAD THINGS HAPPEN TO GOOD PEOPLE?

Now there is a flip-side to this... Another misconception from the life of Job then comes from those who understand what I just explained to you- that His sufferings were not God's purpose and plan for his life. Many who do not believe these things that we just spent some time discussing, then find themselves asking the question- Why then do bad things happen to God's children? Well, that is a good question, and one we need to take a moment to answer...

One reason that bad things happen is, as we have already made the point of, because we have an enemy out there whose primary mission is to steal, kill, and destroy. But then there are other things that happen that are simply a result of living in a curse-laden world. For example, sometimes a birth defect, a natural disaster, a physical or mental illness can be a direct work of the kingdom of darkness, but sometimes they are a result of the curse that is on this earth. This, of course, does not mean that we, as God's ambassadors, are subject to these bad things. We can live free from these things through allowing the Anointed One and His anointing to destroy the yokes of sin and the curse from our lives by faith. But the point I want to conclude this edition of the Living Logos with is that we do not need to worry ourselves with the "Why's"; we should just concern ourselves with how we are to respond when we do not know why!

For example, you might have heard explanations from some on why these things happened to Job. I have. I have heard that the reason why all of these bad things happened to Job was because of his fear. The Scriptural basis that people have used for this is when he said in Job 3:25 that the things that he greatly feared had come upon him. Well, although I certainly believe we can make wrong decisions to open the door to the devil in our lives and fear is certainly one of those wrong decisions, I personally do not believe that Job ever did anything to bring his sufferings on himself. You see, God testified Himself that the things that happened to Job were "without cause" (see Job 2:3). So that makes it pretty clear to me that he did not do anything to cause these calamities to come upon himself. As a matter of fact, Job's three friends that came to "support" him did nothing but try and figure out what sin Job committed to have such a hard time, and this angered God!

So, in my opinion, for us to try and figure out the "why's" for Job's suffering is not what we should be trying to glean from this book. I believe the lesson that God wanted to get across to us through this book was what we should do when we do not know why. In other words, God's purpose for giving us the Book of Job was not to answer the question- "Why did this happen to Job?" God's purpose for the Book of Job was to show us the correct way to respond when we do not know "why"!

You see, I believe the things that happened to Job were unique. I believe that His trials were unprecedented. If you look at what happened to him, Job had what I call the "big three" completely stripped away from him... First, all of his possessions were completely stripped from him in one day when all of his livestock and servants were either stolen or killed. Secondly, all of the loved ones he had in his life were taken when all of his children were killed and when his wife basically turned on him for his faith in God. And, last but not least, his health was then taken from him with what seems to be one of the worst physical problems that could happen to a person. So in a very short time, Job

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had the three most important pieces of life completely stolen, killed, and destroyed- his finances were stolen, his relationships were killed, and his physical health was destroyed.

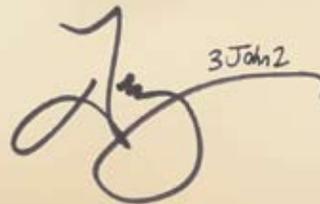
I believe God used the experiences of Job to teach all who would believe on Him afterwards that if we ever have one of these three most valuable parts of life taken from us, we can keep faith in Him and trust Him to bring us to the other side. You see, as bad as we might have had it, our circumstances can in no way compare to the things that Job suffered. Yet he trusted the Lord and persevered. This was to be our example so that we, who deal with much less tragedy than Job did, could learn to stand in faith and trust that the Lord will bring us through.

But my point is that we will not always know why certain situations and circumstances occur in our lives. When we begin seeking to live more godly and pursuing God with all of our heart, then that is when it seems that all hell breaks out in our lives. Well, that is to be expected because the Bible teaches us that those who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution (2 Timothy 3:12). It is just simply a result of swimming upstream. Things will get harder. And it is during these times of tests, trials, and tribulations that you will need to be in a position to trust the Lord! To trust that He is aware of the things that are troubling you and to trust that He has a way of escape prepared for you. In other words, we will oftentimes have to simply trust the Lord through the adversities that happen as a result of living in this fallen world. We will have to trust that He has prepared light at the end of the tunnel and that He is working in our situation to bring about His plan, purpose, and destiny for our lives. This is what it means to "trust" the Lord.

My friends, we must understand that although the story of Job is recorded to teach us to trust God when we do not understand why we are dealing with certain hurts and heartaches, that God is not the author of those tragedies. He is, however, the solution! And if we will just stay on His side and believe that He can bring us through to the other side, then we are well on our way to experiencing victory over every circumstance that we encounter! Praise be to the One who has delivered us, who will deliver us, and who will continue to deliver us!

Till next month... Maranatha!

Victoriously,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Trey Dickerson', with the initials '3Joh2' written to the right of the signature.