

I WILL BE WITH YOU

Chris Khoury Sermon Summary No15



SUFFERING ALL AROUND

In the world, in this small community of believers I know that many are experiencing much in the way of trials. There is hurt, sickness, financial problems and family problems. Children/grand children who have gone astray. Work problems, the list goes on and on.

LACK OF FAITH?

Suffering, trials, problems, are not a 'lack of faith'. On the contrary, I see a lot of faith in this body of believers.

I cannot stand up here and tell you not to worry it will all work out, that God will remove the cancer, you will never have a heart attack, no harm will ever come upon your children. That God will deliver you from your trial and that you do not have to fear. If I did I would be telling a lie. I cannot predict what God will do in any given circumstance.

WHAT POSITIVE MESSAGE CAN I OFFER YOU TODAY?

What has God promised? God does give us an iron clad promise.

What is the central promise of the Bible?

"I forgive you!" You will inherit eternal life!

The most frequent promise is this. **"I will be with you."**

EXAMPLE 1:

Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden. God walked and talked with Adam in the cool of the day.

EXAMPLE 2:

To Joshua just before he led the Israelites into the promised land. "Do not be terrified, **I will be with you** wherever you go.

EXAMPLE 3:

David wrote in Psalm 23. "Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil **for thou art with me.**"

EXAMPLE 4:

When god came to earth in the person of Jesus he was called, "Emmanuel" God with us!

Jesus said, "I am with you, even to the end of the age."

Romans 8

38 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, **39** neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The teaching of scripture is that God *really* is present right here, right now! He is at work all the time, in every circumstance. We don't know what he is doing and more often than not we are unaware of his presence. We fail to see him in the ordinary moments of our everyday lives.

SPIRITUAL AUTOPILOT

We live on 'spiritual autopilot'. The presence of God in our lives no longer has significance. Becomes routine. Loses its impact. When we have something new come into our lives we are intensely aware of it. But the awareness fades over time.

e.g. new engagement ring, watch or new piece of jewellery. We look at it, admire it, show it off, hope that others will notice it. But after a while we don't even know its there. We take it for granted. Experiencing the presence of God can be like that. When we live life outside of the awareness of God what happens?

- we yell at the kids
- worry too much, job, security, family, health
- get jealous of others
- pass judgement, gossip
- prayer life takes a nose dive

God has promised every moment of every day, "I will be with you."

THE STORY OF JACOB

Jacob was a swindler a liar and a cheat. He deceived his father and elder brother, gaining the blessings of the first born even though he was not. One night while fleeing for his life because Esau (his brother) wanted to kill him for the deception, he arrives at a 'certain place'. That is the Bible's way of saying it was no place special. It could have been Poffadder, or Blikkiesdorp, Pinetown. No place special. He lays his head down on a rock and goes to sleep. He has a dream. Sees a ladder, resting on the earth who's top reaches to heaven. The angels of God are ascending and descending on the ladder.

God says to him, "I am the Lord - **I am with you** and will watch over you wherever you go." Jacob wakes up and he is amazed. "Surely, the Lord was in this place and I was not aware of it." Suddenly his eyes were opened to the fact that God was right there in that ordinary insignificant place.

SLEEP WALKING

Each moment that we live our lives outside of the awareness of God's presence is a kind of spiritual sleep walking. Maby that's why Paul wrote these words. "Wake up O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."

Sometimes God opens our eyes to see him. It can be awakened by suffering, blessing, beauty, birth of a baby. God's promise, "I will be with you" is all we have got to hang on to. In the hospital room, the car, on the mountain top, in the still small voice.

JACOB AND ESAU REUNITED

After 20 years of living apart as enemies - Jacob and his brother Esau are reunited. As they embrace each other Jacob says these immortal words, "To see your face is like seeing the face of God."

Despite the circumstances of your life. Jesus said, I will pray to the Father and he will send another 'Comforter' to be with you. One just like me. The "Paracletos" the helper is always by your side. Do not be afraid. God has promised, "I will be with you!"

I can't tell you the outcome of your trial, but you do have the promise of God.