

Matthew 11:28

How TO DEFEAT WHAT IS EATING AT YOU

Sunday P.M. 8-28-11

Intro: Years ago a woman, with her little baby, was riding in a stagecoach in western Montana. The weather was bitter cold, and, in spite of all the driver could do to protect her, he saw that the mother was becoming unconscious from the cold. He stopped the coach, took the baby, and wrapping it warmly, put it under the seat, then seized the mother by the arm, and dragging her out upon the ground, drove away, leaving her in the road. As she saw him drive away, she ran after him, crying piteously for her baby. When he felt sure that she was warm, he allowed her to overtake the coach and resume her place by her baby. Can we not imagine her gratitude when she realized that he had saved her life? He had done as God sometimes does, to shake us out of soul-lethargy and moral sleep which would end in death.

Sometimes God is like that stagecoach driver. He observes the things which we have allowed to enter our lives that are emotionally and spiritually devastating to us. Unsundered areas that over time become a cancer to our soul. They infiltrate and infect our very person and personality. We lose the quality of being like Jesus and instead we become bitter, harsh, self centered, unforgiving, abrasive, and we lose our ability to love the Lord our God with all our heart and to love others as Christ would have us to love them because our concerns and needs are always met and dealt with through our own bankrupt personalities and harshness.

The deep problem is that if we continue to make excuses for our behavior, if we refuse to recognize it or deal with it we become stunted and runted in our life both physically and spiritually and the fruit of the Spirit which is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, faith, goodness, meekness, and self control are not in evidence in any kind of continuing or God honoring fashion. Oh, there may be the occasional time or even the occasional day or days when you make it through without catering or cratering to the devil but it is the exception rather than the rule. Almost inevitably as soon as you have to deal with something or someone that does not either go your way or agree with you that almost immediately you return to the cave of pouting and criticism, and begin the blame game of others all over again. For many people it is far easier to try and pull the beam out of the other persons eye that it is to clean your own glasses. To live like that is to miss the joy in serving Jesus and it is to certainly inflict on others the sadness and the pain of having to deal so constantly with our selfishness and spiritual immaturity.

It is certainly not the life style that is characterized by Jesus words, "He that believeth on me out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water."

Now there is not a one of us that from time to time does not have a bad day. There is not a one of us that does not have to deal with disappointment or depression or with situations or people that at times make us angry. So this evening I am not talking about not ever having to stop and say to God or to your wife or husband, I have sinned please forgive me. We are not talking Mother Theresa here but tonight I am sharing with you a deep concern that I have that often arises in my life and I see it often in counseling and that is carnal Christian living and it grieves the Holy Spirit and our loving Lord Jesus.

What I am dealing with tonight is a continuing lifestyle of that behavior that grips some of God's people that is debilitating and devastating over the long run because it has become the **normal** in our life rather than the **abnormal**. I am referring to an attitude and a lifestyle that though far from satisfying and fulfilling and what we desire in our Christian life we have come to accept and adopt because it is easier than humbling ourselves and following through in confession and repentance and calling our behavior disappointing and sinful in the sight of God.

Now, we have already stated that trouble and trials are part and parcel of the human life. After all, Job said it, **Job 14:1; Man who is born of woman is short lived and full of turmoil.** He restated it in **Job 5:7.** "For man is born of trouble, as sparks fly upward." And so did Jesus, **John 16:33.** "In the world you will have tribulation, but take courage I have overcome the world." Burdens, troubles, trials and difficulties are going to come our way! That is a given. Felix Neff said, "**A Christian without affliction is like a soldier only on parade.**" However, what is not a given is what you and I will do about the trials and troubles that come our way.

I believe God is faithful and patient and will give us opportunity to respond to the promptings and checkings of His Holy Spirit and come into alignment with His plans and purposes. However if we continue to resist and insist on our own onerous and carnal ways God will put us off the stagecoach for a while. We will find that God says "Okay here is what we are going to do to get your spiritual blood flowing through your spiritual heart again. And like the stage coach driver He makes us experience the results of what is eating us until we get sick enough of it to say, Help, Lord, I need Help. I can't stand myself the way I am and I know this is not the way you intend for me to live.

In this little, simple, short verses, Jesus gives us clear teaching on what to do with our burdens. He teaches us **How TO DEFEAT WHAT IS EATING You.** Let's look into this verse for just a few minutes this evening and think on that thought: What can I do to defeat the things that are making me think like I am thinking and act like I am acting?

I. TAKE YOUR DIFFICULTY TO THE RIGHT PLACE

A. Fretting Won't Help You – That word “fret” (CHARA) is an interesting word.

This is what it means.

- a) (Qal) to burn, kindle (anger)
- b) (Niphal) to be angry with, be incensed
- c) (Hiphil) to burn, kindle
- d) (Hithpael) to heat oneself in vexation One of the places it is used is in Genesis 4:5 when God did not have respect unto Cains offering and the Bible says Cain was very wroth (CHARA) angry, disgusted. He was blaming God and not himself for the lack of acceptance of his offering.

Most people want to complain about their besetting difficulties and blame others in part or in whole for the things they are facing, but fretting won't solve a one of them. After all, we are forbidden from worry by the Word, **Phil. 4:6**; “Be anxious for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication let your request be made known to God.” **John 14:1**. “Do not **let** your heart be troubled.” Notice that word “let” there that means allow, give permission to. Don't give permission to your heart to be troubled. Is that possible? Yes, it is, by appropriating the peace and presence of God into your life for that moment and for that need. So often people are just like Martha, **Luke 10:38-42**.) There is Jesus a guest in Martha and Mary's home and the Bible says in verse 40 , “But Martha was distracted with all her preparations. We could say, her difficulties. Those difficulties for her in her situation no different that your difficulties are in your situation. They related to the difficulties in her home and her job. Do you have some of those. She was fretting and it was doing her the same amount of good that it does for you and me and that is “none.”

B. Friends Won't Help You - Job tried to tell his friends about his burdens, but he found that they were “**physicians of no value**”, **Job 13:4**. “But you smear with lies, you are worthless physicians.” The problem with so many of your friends is that they will lie to you! They will allow you to wallow in self-pity and tell you that you have a right to do so. The ones that will tell you the truth you will either get mad at and say they are taking the side of your wife or your husband or your child or your boss and that they just don't understand your situation and you wish just once somebody would see things right, which basically means see it like you see it and agree with you. But even if they do sympathize with you, they can't really help you with the real burdens of life! Did you know that a real friend is someone who tells you the truth, even when it rips your heart out? **Pro. 27:6** This is what that verse says, “Faithful are the wounds of a friend.” Wounds those aren't any fun, wounds don't you have enough of those already? I don't want wounds, I want approval, I want understanding. So unless your friend gives you wise and Godly counsel based on what you need to hear rather than what you want to hear, and unless you then take that counsel to heart and go to the Lord, its just words going in one ear and out the other.

- C. **Fleeing Won't Help You** - You will never be able to run away from the problems and trials of life. Israel found this out the hard way - **Num. 13-14; Deut. 9.**) What a hard thing it is to try and run from the solution to your difficulty. You can quit your job, you can move to a different place, you can divorce your spouse, you can isolate yourself, but it's just like Pasto Carlson has been heard to say, "Wherever you go, there you are." The Bible is referencing that when it says you can flee from a bear outside your home and run into your house and lean upon the wall out of breath and get bitten by a poisonous spider. There is that old old saying, "You can run but you cannot hide."
- D. **Fighting Won't Help You** - A lot of people try to live in denial and fight what they are called to face. Fighting against what we bring into our lives that makes us small and bitter, and unforgiving and contentious is dangerous! After a while you aren't fighting against bitterness if you aren't careful, you might find yourself fighting against God.
- D. **The Father Will Help You** - Notice the invitation - "**Come!**" The Lord throws open the door to His throne room and invites all who are in need to come to Him for help, **Heb. 4:16**. His love and concern for the sheep - **Luke 12:32**. **Jesus** lovingly calls out and says, "Do not be afraid for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the kingdom." He is our Father and He is interested in helping us through the difficult passageways of life! He is our shepherd and He will see to what we need, **Psa. 23:1-6**. The various names the Jews had for the Lord. Jesus gave them a new one in the Disciple's Prayer - **Luke 11:2** it is called "Father"

II. **TRANSFER YOUR DIFFICULTY TO THE RIGHT PERSON**

- A. **There Is One Who Cares About Your Situation** - **1 Pet. 5:7** - Jesus has walked through loneliness, need, difficulty and death. He has been hated, loved, accepted and rejected. He knows what you are going through and He cares about you, **Heb. 4:15**. Our high priest (Jesus) is moved by our difficulty, our problem. Don't think for a minute that He won't understand! He does! He knows what you need more than you know it yourself!
- B. **There Is One Who Can Do Something About Your Situation** - Not only does He know what we face, He can change what we face and how we face it! His power is beyond imagination - **Eph. 3:20**, "**He is abundantly able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think.**" **Job 42:2**; Job said, "I know that you can do all things and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted." **Luke 1:38**. Nothing will be impossible with God. **Isa. 40:12** - If He can place the stars in heaven with a spreading of the

fingers, then your problems and mine pose no problem at all to Him! If He can.... for..., then He can.. For you!)

III. TRUST YOUR DIFFICULTY TO THE RIGHT PROVISIONS

What are those provisions for God to help you and give you victory?

- A. **Sometimes He Will Remove Your Difficulty** - There are times when the Lord changes your situation in an instant, removing your burden. The Widow of Zarephath - **1 Kings 17!**

- B. **Sometimes He Will Relieve Your Difficulty** - There are times when the Lord will leave the burden on your shoulders, but He will lighten the burden a little bit. He did this for Ruth when He allowed her path to cross that of Boaz, **Ruth 2-3!**

- C. **Sometimes He Will Rest You In Your Difficulty** – This is true if the difficulty you are facing are the carnal attitudes and actions of others either in a marriage or a job or with your health. This is the most common aid we receive from Him. He gives us grace to carry the load we have been assigned, **2 Cor. 12:9**. “My grace is sufficient for you.” O the delight and the glory of Him changing us in our situation instead of Him just changing our situation. You can rest in His yoke, His house, His Spirit, His Peace.

However He decides to handle your situation, you can be sure that He will always do that which is right for your life, **Rom. 8:28**. And, you can rest on His promise that He will meet your need, **Phil. 4:19!** He is still Jehovah-Jireh - **Gen. 22:14.**) In the mount of the Lord, “IT WILL BE PROVIDED”

Conc: What’s handling you tonight? What is eating you tonight? Why don’t you just bring it to Him? He knows how to handle what’s handling you. He has help for your need. He is waiting to say, Would you hand it over to me in sincere confession and repentance and let me be your deliverance. Would you stop struggling and fighting and kicking against the goad or goads and give it to me?

Prayer