

When Life Turns to Despair

www.aubeacon.com

Introduction: There will be times where our world will be turned upside down.

- A. In these times we even despair for life, we feel crushed. **(Psa 143:4-5)**
 - 1. There are many things that can bring this on.
 - 2. It is not a sin to find yourself in despair. God allows such tests. **(Lk 22:31-32)**
 - 3. It is crucial that we respond by faith! In these times we are talking about survival. It is possible for our faith to fail.
- B. Even if things are going well for you now, do not ignore this lesson!
 - 1. So much is already determined by the kind of faith we have already developed. **(1 Pet 1:7)**
 - 2. Those who today serve God only when they feel like it will find it nearly impossible to do right at these times. They are “an accident waiting to happen.”
 - 3. In building a local church we must not try to make things as easy as possible. This will make people as weak as water. **(1 Cor 3:11-14)**
 - 4. How sad it is for Christians to despise the discipline that will make them strong. Often the results are not seen for years.
 - 5. What would you do if

I. Make God Your Refuge

- A. What kind of God do you serve?
 - 1. Often the scriptures speak of knowing God. What does this mean? **(Titus 1:16; 1 Jn 4:8)**
 - 2. Every step of the Christian life teaches us to trust in God and not in ourselves. **(Prov 3:5-6)**
 - 3. The conversion from the world to Christ must involve this kind of faith. **(Col 2:12)**
 - 4. The real question is how we have developed this faith. Some Christians have long stopped trusting God. Will you obey Him without question?
- B. Those who know God will draw as close to Him as they can in these times.
 - 1. It is great to know that God will deliver! **(Psa 143:4-12)**
 - 2. Abraham had this kind of faith. **(Heb 11:17-19)**
 - 3. There is a great strength you have when you know these things! **(Heb 13:5-6)**
 - 4. God wants us to turn to Him even when our sin is the cause of our despair. **(Psa 106:43-46; Psa 51:7-10)**
- C. Humbly Turn to God so you may Learn.
 - 1. Some of the best lessons of life are learned at these times.
 - a. Job came to see God clearly, he was blessed. **(Job 42:5-6)**
 - b. There are those who never learn from adversity. **(Prov 27:22)**
 - 2. In order to learn we must keep thinking and keep seeking.
 - 3. Now we must pour out our hearts to God in worship! He wants to carry this burden.

- a. David learned the power of worship both before and after.
(**2 Sam 12:19-23**)
- b. When you come to know God like this you will be blessed.

II. Give Diligence to Staying Faithful

- A. Mistakes made here could destroy you.
 - 1. God knows this and seeks to help, so should other Christians. (**Heb 12:11-13**)
 - 2. You bear a responsibility too! You must be determined to heal this wound and not make it fatal. Listen!
- B. Do not quit the Lord. (**Heb 10:35-38**)
 - 1. Some will stop coming to services or go to a group they know are wrong doctrinally.
 - 2. Others will stop being active in the Lord's work and fade away.
 - 3. Those who quit God have denied themselves their only hope. Sadly many will deny quitting the Lord when that is exactly what they have done.
 - 4. Do what is right regardless of how you feel!
- C. Cast off all excess weight in your life. (**Heb 12:1-3**)
 - 1. Because you must survive, things that have a value but are not essential must be cast off. (**Acts 27:18-19**)
 - a. Here you will show where your true priorities lie, and here you will live or die spiritually.
 - b. God describes this as a purifying process for our hearts as well.
 - 2. Here you must get away from those who will only hurt your survival.
 - a. Job had to put away his wife's advice. (**Job 2:9-10**)
 - b. Here is where your associates can make you or break you. Do they seek to stir bitterness or point you to God's way? Some never recover because of their "friends". Who is the loser here? (**Prov 25:4-5; Prov 26:22-26**)

III. Look to the Future Good that God will Work in You.

- A. We should rejoice in our adversity, why?
 - 1. Because we are like Christ. (**Acts 5:41-42; Phil 1:27-30**)
 - 2. Because we know God will prevail to bring good. (**Rom 8:28**)
- B. Because of a clear understanding of our hope. (**1 Pet 1:6-9**)
 - 1. There are times Jesus asked His disciples: "Do you know believe?". Here is where we know. (**Gen 22:12**)
 - 2. It may be we must find answers at this time.
 - 3. Heaven will seem more beautiful than ever in these times. Pain will not last.
(**1 Cor 7:29-31**)
- C. Because God will use us in a future work.
 - 1. Our faith is perfected. (**Jas 1:2-4**)
 - 2. Our wisdom is increased. (**Jas 1:5; 2 Cor 1:3-4**)
 - 3. Our influence for good is greater. (**2 Cor 12:7-9**)

Conclusion: What is this life really all about?

- A. We will give our real answer in times of despair. Where are you?

B. Suffering when accompanied by a living faith will always work out for good!
(Rom 8:31-37)