

Surviving The Difficulties of Life

Sunday, May 6, 2018
10:30 AM

John 16:1 (NIV)

16 “All this I have told you so that you will not fall away.

John 16:33 (NIV)

33 “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have **trouble**. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

Difficulties can be tragic...

Difficulties can be ongoing...

Difficulties can be heartbreaking, frustrating and annoying...

We Summarized Chapter 1 with this thought.... CLING TO GOD

And said...

1. It wasn't a **sin** to leave Bethlehem because of the famine
But sometimes our search for answers from the difficulties of life separates us from our faith and connection with God
2. Surviving the difficulties of life begins as we realize that despite our troubles, God is a **good** God and has **help** for us
3. There is often a **journey** back to, or for some the first time, that place of faith and relationship with God.
4. We will have to make a **choice** as to where we will look for strength and provision
5. If we are to make it through we must **cling** to God
 - Illustration of the Gideon Testimony
6. Difficulties may **change** us, but they don't have to **define** us

Chapter 2 could be summarized with this thought.... GETTING OUR FOCUS OFF OF THE DIFFICULTY AND ON TO GOD

We do this by recognizing and implementing the following ...

1. There is a **man**. (Verse 1, 20)
2. Don't **give up** on life (Verse 2)
3. Keep **Moving** - with the intent of moving forward if you can
4. Trust in God's **provision, protection, and plan** for your life
5. **Invest** in the lives of others

In Chapter 3, the emphasis changes from what we can do to survive the difficulties of life to what God does for us to help us survive the difficulties of life. We learned that we have a Guardian Redeemer

As our Kinsmen redeemer, Jesus...

1. Has the responsibility of redeeming us

- But notice the initiation of this event.... Ruth's obedient and humble approach indicating her desire to be redeemed
- I still believe that Jesus is just waiting for an invitation, or more appropriately our acceptance of his invitation
- He became one of us, our close relative so that he could have the right to redeem us
- I will do for you all you ask

2. Has the desire to redeem us

- He values us
 - Value is not inherent in the object itself, but comes as a result of the desire of the one who longs for it.
- He wants us
- He loves us
- He is willing to be united with us and give us his name
- He was willing to pay the price of our redemption

3. Has the means of redeeming us

- Power
- Authority
- Resources
- He will fight for us

Ruth 4:11-22 New International Version (NIV)

11 Then the elders and all the people at the gate said, “**We are witnesses.** May the Lord make the woman who is coming into your home like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the family of Israel. May you have standing in Ephrathah and be famous in Bethlehem.

12 Through the offspring the Lord gives you by this young woman, may your family **be like that of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah.**”

Naomi Gains a Son

13 So Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife. When he made love to her, the **Lord enabled her to conceive**, and she gave birth to a son. **14** The women said to Naomi: “Praise be to the Lord, who this day has not left you without a guardian-redeemer. May he become famous throughout Israel! **15** He will renew your life and sustain you in your old age. For your daughter-in-law, who loves you and who is better to you than seven sons, has given him birth.”

16 Then Naomi **took the child in her arms and cared for him.** **17** The women living there said, “Naomi has a son!” And they named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.

The Genealogy of David

18 This, then, is the family line of Perez: Perez was the father of Hezron, **19** Hezron the father of Ram, Ram the father of Amminadab, **20** Amminadab the father of Nahshon, Nahshon the father of Salmon, **21** Salmon the father of Boaz, Boaz the father of Obed, **22** Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David.

As we complete our study of the book of Ruth there are three final thoughts I want to leave with you concerning Surviving The Difficulties of Life

1. There is always a future with God (Expectantly Anticipate The Future)

Show how Tamar's situation was difficult, desperate and hopeless, helpless, tragic but God overcame all that and gave her future

Boaz would not be there to be rescue Ruth had not God given Tamar a future son

King David would not be there had God not given Ruth a future

It is not important that we know WHAT the future is, just that there IS a future

Proverbs 23:18 New International Version (NIV)

18 There is surely a future hope for you, and your hope will not be cut off.

Psalms 27:14 New International Version (NIV)

14 Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord

Isaiah 58:11 New International Version (NIV)

11 The Lord will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail.

2. Don't stay chained to the past (Cherish and remember the past)

There is a difference between living in the past and remembering the past. To survive our difficulties we have to let go of the hurt, anger, frustration, questions, doubt, fear

Some people are so chained to the past that they can't **live** in the present some people are so worried about the future they can **enjoy** the present

we use our difficulties as building blocks for prisons that keep us from our future

God uses our difficulties as building blocks for our future

Remember Joseph's life

Genesis 41:50-52 New International Version (NIV)

50 Before the years of famine came, two sons were born to Joseph by Asenath daughter of Potiphera, priest of On. **51** Joseph named his firstborn Manasseh[[a](#)] and said, "It is because God has made me forget all my trouble and all my father's household." **52** The second son he named Ephraim[[b](#)] and said, "It is because God has made me fruitful in the land of my suffering."

Footnotes:

1. [Genesis 41:51](#) *Manasseh* sounds like and may be derived from the Hebrew for *forget*.
2. [Genesis 41:52](#) *Ephraim* sounds like the Hebrew for *twice fruitful*.

Genesis 45:5-7 New International Version (NIV)

5 And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you. **6** For two years now there has been famine in the land, and for the next five years there will be no plowing and reaping. **7** But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance.

3. Nurture the present

16 Then Naomi **took the child in her arms and cared for him.**

God is the “I Am” this is how he introduces himself to Moses and it is one of the greatest descriptions of God’s characteristics given us in the Bible. That He is in our present. He is always with us

Matthew 6:25-34 New International Version (NIV)

Do Not Worry

25 “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? **26** Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? **27** Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?

28 “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. **29** Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. **30** If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? **31** So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ **32** For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. **33** But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. **34** Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Twice in this last chapter of the book of Ruth we are told that the people around them took notice of their testimony. This reminds us that our difficulties and the way in which we go through them and the way in which God brings us through them, becomes a great testimony to those around us

Rejoice in the victories God brings into your life

There will always be new difficulties to face