

STRONGER

A Message by Pastor Asa Dockery

3/13/13

As I said earlier the Lord has given me a special word tonight. I told my sister this week, after Sunday's service, I never know what is going to happen when I step up here. And I don't. I have an outline, but, I don't know what direction or how the Anointing is going to flow. But this is the - looking back on Sunday, in retrospect, this is the analogy that came to my mind. It is like stepping into a boxing ring sometimes. Because sometimes I get the stuffing beat out of me while I'm talking to you, literally. So, what doesn't kill you makes you stronger.

But it says in Daniel 11:32 And the people that know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits.

And in the context of that scripture, it is talking about when the anti-christ comes he is going to seduce many with flatteries, but the people who know their God are going to be strong and carry out great exploits. And so I want to ask a few questions and get this set up tonight.

How many can say you have grown stronger spiritually, and in particular, in your faith over the past year, raise your hand.

Now that is the benefit of all the fiery trials you have been going through. That is a by-product of fiery trials, but, it is not just the fiery trials because the world goes through the same trials we do, and they don't grow. Do you know that?

If you want to base it on suffering alone, the people in Ethiopia should be far stronger Christians than any other person in America. So it is not the hell-fire and brimstone that makes us strong, it is the faith in the fire that makes us stronger. So if you are stronger in your faith walk with God, then you should have more stamina or endurance when faced with fiery trials. Let me give you a for instance.

You know things that use to get under your skin and bother you, they don't bother you anymore. That's how you know you are getting stronger. Right? Things that use to take your peace no longer have power to do that any longer. Isn't that something?

I mean use to you would stay awake and fret, and worry about this and that, and now you just go to sleep. And Satan is like, “I used to keep them up all night over that little ‘ole thing. Now I can turn the house upside down, run the kids off, and they go back to sleep. What’s up with them? Do they not care? “

Oh, there’s a big difference. It’s not that we don’t care, it is that we have come to know the One in Whom we have believed that He is able to keep that. And if He can keep that, then I don’t have to stay up and worry about that. I’ve learned how to give it to Him. Now there are a few reasons why you have the testimony of being stronger in your faith walk. A few reasons. We are going to talk about those tonight.

Trials that test our faith produce endurance in us. When trials come that test our faith, God you said and this seems to be opposing what you said, then it will if you stay in the faith, it will cause you to grow in endurance. It will cause you to grow in endurance. You will have more stamina in the Spirit.

As our patience is being developed, we will become stronger as a result. Now when we first come to Christ we are anything but strong spiritually speaking. We just think we are strong. So the Lord allows us to under go the process of being made stronger. How? By having our faith be put to the test. All we see from our perspective, from where we are here on earth, all we see and know at the time our faith is being tried is the pain, the discomfort, the restlessness, that is associated with the trials. But God sees endurance being produced in us, and this pleases Him because you are standing by faith, because you are standing by faith and not running.

See, this is hard for believers to get a hold of or to grasp this principle that the Lord is showing us tonight. A lot of times when trouble comes, immature Christians, or carnal Christians, or baby Christians will have the instinct to want to run. Bolt. But how many times did God say in the Old Testament, and in the New Testament, “Be still. Do not be afraid. Fear not. Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. “ I think it has been recorded that there are 365 times it is said in the Word, “Fear not.” So when God sees that we have stopped running and that we have learned how to be still in the fiery furnace, He says, “Now I know they are standing by faith. And when they stand by faith, –watch this– , I can build on them.” He is wanting to build a holy nation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people.

Now look there is 1 Peter, chapter 5, how many know that you can't build on anything that runs around? Have you ever tried to nail a 2x4 that kept falling down on the ground? It just don't work. But once you get that thing nailed, it will stand there, and you can build on it. Well, God has to get us to quit running in fear and stand in faith and then He can build on us. 1 Peter, chapter 5, beginning with verse 8. It says:

8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. (NKJV)

Seeking whom? Those he can devour, right? But what are we to do when he does that?

9 Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. (NKJV)

Resist him. How? Steadfast in the faith. What does steadfast mean? Don't move. Hold still. Keep your faith. Continue doing what God said before the storm hit. Resist him. Don't be moved by him. Do this by standing steadfast in the faith. Knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. You are not the only one going through this.

10 But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.(NKJV)

Who called us to His eternal glory... You have been called to God's glory. He is not going to share His glory with man. So we got to change. Right?

Paul tells us in First Corinthians, he says, we have this treasure in earthen vessels. So when you have this Treasure buried deep in an earthen vessel, and He is trying to get what is in us out of us, He has to start peeling some layers off.

Have you ever found an old antique piece of furniture that is real nice? And you know it is made of fine mahogany or oak and it is very valuable, but it has got 10 layers of paint on it. And you start stripping that paint, layer after layer, after layer, after layer, and then eventually you start seeing the grain of the wood. And all of a sudden you have a nice piece of furniture and you start putting the linseed oil or something that brings that grain out. And you think how beautiful this piece of furniture is and why would anyone ever cover it up?

God is trying to peel us to get the glory out and we are trying to cover it up. So we

are being peeled, -I hate to use it this way-, from faith to faith and from glory to glory. Back to our scripture:

10 But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus,

He has called us to glory by Christ Jesus and then he has to insert these few little phrases:

after you have suffered a while,

He will **perfect, establish,**

Establish, so that means you are going to be still. You are going to stand still when others would run.

He is going to **strengthen you, and He is going to settle you. 11 To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.**

As we answer the call of God on our lives and draw closer to the Lord we will inevitably meet up with some resistance, AKA, persecution. He said there is a roaring lion going about seeking whom he may devour, resist him. Well, what is he trying to do? He is trying to pull you into something. Right? You are at peace. You are having a good week. And then, all of a sudden, this little thing blows up. And it is trying to pull you into that. And you do your best to stay out of it. But it keeps blowing up! And eventually you say, "Ah, foie. I'll just get in there in the midst of it and have it like the rest of them."

That is not what the Bible says. The Bible says, "Resist it!"

There is something that is tempting you. You are doing what you are suppose to be doing. Something is seducing you, trying to get your attention, to draw you away from what God has told you to do, and the enemy is taunting you and tempting you, trying to steal your attention. God is saying, "Resist him! He is trying to involve you so that he can pull you away from your calling! Resist it! There is friction here." Resist that friction. Resist that urge to want to go off. Be still. Right?

So when we begin to answer God's calling and we begin drawing closer like we have been for the last 30 days, and thank God that is over, we will inevitably meet up with that resistance or persecution. Now we look at that in the natural and we say that it's bad, bad, bad. Don't want anything to do with it. Right? But in the spirit God is saying, "No it's good, it's good, it's good."

It is the resistance or the perseverance against the resistance that will build our faith muscles. You cannot work out with weights and not have some resistance. The weight of that object is going to create resistance to your muscles, but, your muscles have to pull on it, right? Well, whenever something comes into your life that resists your faith and makes you want to act in your Adam nature instead of your Christ nature, you have to resist that. When you resist that instead of giving in to it, it makes you stronger.

Now, have you ever worked out and afterwards you were like noodles? You were shaky, you were weak? Well, whenever you go into a fiery trial and you resist the enemy you start shaking. You are weak because that trial is revealing the weakness in you. Now as you resist that the grace of God is going to start running, the blood is going to start running to the torn muscle tissues in your body because they are being stretched. They are being pulled. I've been pulled, I've been persecuted, I've been cast down, but I am not forsaken. So, he was being stretched. Wasn't he? Stretched beyond measure.

Now, as you are being stretched, as you are being pulled, there is pain that is involved in that, but, that pain, if you will give it to God, He will turn it into strength. Because after you have endured, and after you have worked out, and after you done the work out, then you have to rest, and in the resting is when the healing comes and the strength starts manifesting.

You think how in the world did Job go through all that he went through? He lost all that he did and he still had the passion in his heart to even want to talk to God? He found it in his resting. He rested in God. Though God slay me, yet will I trust Him. He was resting in his pain. In the resting, --watch this-- , God restored him! When you learn how to rest in God, in the pain, God will restore you and you will come out of it stronger than you were when you went into it!

Give Him praise in this house! He is worthy!
Good preaching, hard living...

It is the resistance or the perseverance against the resistance that builds the faith muscles. Makes our faith stronger. Makes us strong in our faith, in other words.

Yes, the pain hurts. Can I get a witness? But don't let it keep you from continuing on in faith. But it hurts. As you endure the resistance while standing in faith on God's word, you will at some point draw closer to God in the trial through the Word and prayer inevitably. If it is a strong enough fire or trial it will eventually, that resistance will pull you closer to God.

See, I asked you are you stronger and you said, "yes." Now I am telling you the reasons why. In the fiery trial you are going to meet resistance. If you will resist the resistance by faith that will build you up and make you stronger. Because in the fire you will want to be drawn closer to God. Remember when you were younger, maybe about 35, and you got hurt and you said, "Where's mom?" (Laughter) It makes you want to! You want to be comforted! Where's my blanket?!

Well, when you are in the fire, you want God! It's not good for man to be alone. But what he left out there was –in the fire!!!

So, as you endure the resistance while standing in faith in God's word, you will at some point begin drawing closer to God. Now the test or the trial that Satan launched against you, because you withstood it in faith, only caused you to realize even more that God was with you and this caused you to trust the Lord even more, even though He, God, allowed it. Have you considered My servant, Job? Right? That messes with the carnal mind, don't it? Why would I draw closer to a God who ultimately allowed this thing to come on me? Because in the test I saw the faithfulness of God. I saw the love of God. I saw the goodness of God. And it was that, see, I was lost and undone. Had God not saved me I would have burst hell wide open. But God! But God who is rich in mercy and kindness toward us saved us while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Right?

But God! See God is there in our situation and it's there in the fire that we see the faithfulness of God to us who felt unworthy. And that makes us look beyond well he allowed this. This lets us see, hey, wait a minute, He loves me because He's here with me in this. And it makes the two become stronger in the fire.

Now, as we stand on God's Word, and endure faithful until the end or until the victory comes then we will see the faithfulness or the salvation of the Lord. That is what Moses told the Jews there in Egypt, right, at the Red Sea? Be still until the end,

until the victory. And then you will see the salvation of the Lord. If we will be still or stand on God's Word and endure the trial, the testing, until we see the end of this thing, then we too will see the salvation of the Lord. As a result we come to know Him more. See, they saw Him at the Red Sea when God had delivered them out of the hand of Pharaoh. They saw Him as a Deliverer. Not just as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They saw Him as the Deliverer.

Now, turn with me to **Hebrews 11:1**.

Pain skews our vision. It messes with our perception. Pain and suffering will pull up the dross in us. Have you ever noticed that? When ever you are suffering, if there is something in there, it is going to come out of you. Just ask a nurse. So we have to have vision beyond the pain. If you don't have vision to see beyond the pain, to see beyond the mountain, to see beyond the trial you are going through you will give up in the trial. God says, "I am going to allow your faith to be tried. But the same faith that is going to be tried, is going to have the ability to see beyond the pain."

Let me give you an example. I've shared this a lot but some of you may have never heard it. When Michael was little child, he was probably about 2 or 3, he had pneumonia or something. He was very ill. I was at work. I was up on Aska Road in Blue Ridge. Debbie called me on the job. She said he was very sick and we had to take him to the hospital. So I was driving across those mountains there on Aska Road, and I topped one of the mountains and tears were falling out of my eyes and stuff. I was crying out to God to help our son. This was the first fiery trial that we had with our little juniors. I didn't know that it was preparation for others. I came to the top of the mountain and I looked over. And I could see the mountain range. I had a panoramic view all around. And I looked and these mountains just cascaded around me. I saw Jesus stand up high above the mountains. When I saw Jesus, I heard Him speak into my spirit. He said, "I will be greater than any mountain you will ever face."

Now, faith comes by hearing, and so had I not heard that testimony, that witness, that "I will be bigger than any mountain you will ever face," then I would not have had that kind of tenacity to endure the stuff that we have had to endure since then.

Because without faith I cannot see beyond this mountain. So the same faith that is being tried is the same door or access that gives me the ability to see the invisible so I can do the impossible through Christ. It gives you that fortitude that others who do

not have faith in Christ will not have. And they, in unbelief, will throw up their hands and give up on God. It is because they never really had faith.

Now, look there in Hebrews 11:1.

1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.
(NKJV)

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for. What are you hoping for? To live past this trial. To get out of this bondage. To get out of this sickness. To get out of this disease, this attack on our marriage, this attack on our children, this attack – whatever the attack is. It is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

See, when you have true faith it gives you that ability to see beyond the limitations of your natural ability. You can then through faith, I can do all things through Christ even though right now every thing is stacked against me. But there is something inside of me that sees beyond tomorrow, sees beyond this bill, sees beyond this sickness, and starts seeing the healing, the deliverance, and the breakthrough! And people look at you and say, “Boy, you are peculiar.” Well, then I qualify for a Christian.

I am not letting this mountain talk me out of my faith. I am going to talk to the mountain. “Why would I talk to a mountain, Jesus?” Because that mountain has a spirit associated to it, and if you will speak to the spirit of the mountain, the mountain and the spirit will be removed.

So true faith can see through the smoke screen of Satan when he attacks you. Even though our mind and our emotions are way off the chart our faith in God will keep us grounded in the Word as we endure. This is the key, tonight, to this sermon...endure. Betty, you’ve got to endure, don’t you. There is no other option. I mean, where else can we go? There is only Him. He alone has the words to eternal life. But if we will endure the pain, the displeasure, then we are going to stay rooted. Anything that stays rooted does what? It grows.

I’ll beeee! You mean I’ve gotta stay in church? I gotta stay in relationship with the body of Christ? I gotta stay in fellowship with the Holy Spirit? Well, pull up your roots and see how well you do out on the highway. You’ll start losing your strength

because your roots have no nutrients. Asphalt does not give you any nutrients. It gives you road rash. (Laughter) I'm glad I can entertain you....

Matthew 16. Matthew 16:13 to be exact. I believe that is where Simon lives. Tonight is my reward for surviving Sunday. Yes, amen. (Laughter) Give me high five Darrel.

Matthew 16, verse 13. Are you there? **13 When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" 14 So they said, "Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." (NKJV)**

He said to **them**. He has already asked who they say and now He is asking them. He is asking those who had walked with Him up to this point.

15 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" 16 Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." (NKJV)

You are the Christ. Watch this. The Son of who? The Son of the living God. Not just the Son of man. But also, You are the Christ the Son of the Living God.

17 Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. (NKJV) Faith shows you what the eyes cannot see and the understanding cannot perceive.

See, there was no way for Simon to know that Jesus was the Son of the living God. Only faith could reveal that. Are you getting a hold of this tonight? That is why you want to hold on to your faith. Because your faith will give you vision to see out of this mess. It will make a way for you where there seemeth to be no way. Right? You don't have to go into sin. Be still.

18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. (NKJV)

And I say unto you that you are Peter – now wait a minute. He asked who do men say that I am? So why is He telling Simon who He is? Ah-ha. The more you see Jesus as Christ the more He is going to show you who you are in Him.

and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. (NKJV)

And on this rock – not Peter. Upon the revelation of who Christ is. Who we are in Christ - upon this rock I will, I will what?? But wait a minute. He can't build upon us

if we are running around in fear. So, He's got to get us to be still so He can build upon us. But upon this rock of revelation, when we start realizing who we are in Christ by faith, and that is the only way you are going to get the revelation, then you are going to start being still. When you become still then He can build on you and watch what happens to the church when it is still – **the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. 19 And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.**" (NKJV)

I will give you the keys of the kingdom. There is the authority. When you get still you get your identity in Christ through faith and He is going to start giving you authority.

Instead of us running the enemy is going to start running. They will come against us in one direction but our authority in Christ will scatter them in seven different directions. Right? They will rob from us but they will have to give it back to us seven fold. Right?

I will give you the keys of the kingdom. Yeah. You're already adding it up, aren't you? **19 And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.**" (NKJV)

So, when we first come to Christ we still associate with our old identity, Simon, son of Jonah. But when we begin to stand in faith, instead of running, tucking tail and running, but we stand still during the trials, to avoid the pain, we will begin to learn who Jesus is. He is the Son of God. Well, don't I already know that? Faith has already revealed that to us, yes. But to what degree do you know it?? That is the key.

In turn He will reveal to us who we are in Him. This will make us stronger. Then He can build on us. Right now it looks like we are being torn down and torn apart. But if we will endure the construction process, and not flake out, we will see that God is actually building the true church that will be able to overcome the gates of hell. It is just getting people to be still long enough. Well, I've been coming here 12 years, is the construction done? NO! How long do I have to wait? Until the construction is done. Until you get the COO. Certificate of Occupancy. You can possess the land

now. You can go in. You can come out of bondage. You endure until. Right?

Now, it looks like we are being torn down and apart. But really, we are under construction. God is establishing us. But He can't get us still long enough to get us there. So what does He do? He gets us in a position to where we have to be still. Have you ever noticed this? When you don't like being still and something happens to you that you have to be still? You start getting a nasty attitude. Because you don't like being still and you're mad at God because He made you become still, so not only has God got to heal you, He has to pour in you what He wanted for you while you were out running around, now He also has to help you get through that attitude. That was free.... that is not in the notes.

So, He is working in us. He's getting us established, settled, so He can build on us and use us so He can give us that authority. Now turn to Romans 8:14. Why is it the good sermons always go too quickly?

Romans 8:14 14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. 15 For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father."

16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are— we are, we are, we are, not we might be, should be, possibly might, no we are! If you have the Spirit in you then you are. ---The children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs— I don't care what this world tells you, what Satan lies to you about, you are an heir of God! It doesn't matter how dark the trial is, how hard it is, how much people dislike you because of what you are going through, you are still an heir. Heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. 18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. 19 For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing – the resurrection – of the sons of God. (NKJV)

The manifestation, the unveiling, the coming forth of us as the true sons and daughters of God. Creation is waiting, mourning, travailing, waiting for us to come forth in what God has ordained for us to be. Right?

So the Lord is establishing us as His sons and daughters in the earth. Our mandate from God is that we keep the faith and endure the suffering until the process is

complete and we overcome every lie and temptation that the devil throws at us. Nothing moves us. Did you know the only way nothing can move you is that you are dead.

And they over came him –watch this – by the blood of the Lamb, the word of their testimony, and loved not their lives unto the ? What? The death. (Rev. 12:11) We don't overcome until we die. So that is why we have to crucify the flesh. To help God get it done. "Get 'er done."

We will endure as long as we know that God is faithful to deliver us out of all our afflictions. We will endure as long as we know this has a shelf life. It didn't come to stay. One of my favorite passages. It came to pass. And it will pass. As soon as the Word has done its' work. Its' complete work while we endured the change we have to go through. The moment the change is done, we cope. The pain is gone. The child is out. The joy comes. The pain is forgotten about. True faith in Christ will face troubles, endure troubles, but will also deliver you from all troubles. The same faith, watch this. This is so neat. The same faith that delivers us from trouble invites the trouble to us. And as long as you run that faith will attract that trouble Moses. You can't outrun your troubles when you've got your faith in there. Cause one day that faith and that trouble is going to meet up. But that same faith that attracted the trouble to you is the same faith that is going to give you the ability to overcome it. And when you overcome it, it will only prove you were born of God so everything that's born of God overcomes the world.

T. D. Jakes was preaching one time and he said, "Have you noticed you've been going through all this junk, and have you noticed you are still here?" "Yeah, but..." "Yeah, but you are still here." That only proves you are a child of God. It didn't get you up rooted. It didn't throw you out. Revelation 3. Amen, preach it brother. Revelation 3:8. Jesus has such a way of putting us in our place. We thing we are all that. That we are doing real good and then He comes and tells us how we are really doing. Look here in verse 8.

8 I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, Gee, thanks Jesus. I thought I was doing real good. I had a little muscles. And you say I have a little strength. How did I get that strength? Say it with me, "**have kept My word, and have not denied My name.**"

(NKJV) You stayed. That is how you get your strength. You stay.

I had somebody tell me the other day their faith has grown in leaps and bounds since they started coming to this church. It's the Word. Not just hearing it, but applying what you hear. That will make you strong. You will grow. But when you are in the process, "I just don't know if I want to do this anymore." But sometimes you just need to stop and look back. Wow, I've come a long way since I got here. I think I'll stay another service.

9 Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, (falsehood), but lie--indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. Wow. 10 Because, Here it comes again, **you have kept My command to** to what? **To persevere,(endurance)** Now because you have kept my command to persevere, how many have persevered? Here is the promise. Are you ready? **I also will keep you from the hour of trial (or temptation), which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. 11 Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown. (NKJV)**

Get a hold of what God is fixing to lay on you right here. We have a little strength because we have kept the faith and stood on God's word during the trails we have been going through. We got a little strong. Stuff don't bother us like it used to. And because we have and we continue to hold on in faith we are preparing ourselves for that day when Christ will deliver us from the hour of temptation that will come upon the earth. Did you know that by your persevering, you keep coming to church, you keep reading, praying and seeking God's will for your life, by you persevering through all the trials, all the junk, all the nan-na-nan-na you are preparing yourself for the day of Christ's return.

It does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know this, that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is. And as we persevere through all this hardship, the loss, this death, as we persevere it is changing us into the image of Christ and the closer we get to the day of Christ, the more we are going to look like Christ. So that when He appears we are going to look just like Him. You are preparing yourself for that day. Is this strengthening you tonight?

Do you know why? It is giving you a purpose, a method to God's madness. You are not laboring and going through all this in vain. That is what Satan tells you. That is why people faint and grow weary and stop doing what God says because they do not see any purpose in their pain.

And because we persevere, and we have kept the faith, and have a little strength, Jesus has promised, it's written in red, "He is going to deliver us in the hour of temptation that is coming upon the whole earth." Get this in your spirit. He tells us or them to endure and persevere and then after they have endure all this stuff, gone through all the loss, the sufferings, over 100 houses of Christians burnt down in Lahore, Pakistan this past week and I think they arrested over 150 guys which did that, and we wonder. They are God's children. On facebook they were giving glory to Jesus. They are not saying "Allah". They are saying, "Jesus". They are children of God. They have lost everything they owned and they are enduring this hardship. And you say, how could God allow Christians to suffer such horrific loss. Because we are going to get something that is incorruptible, undefiled and is eternal, for this temporal stuff that we forsake to keep our faith, to persevere.

Now, He tells us if we endure and persevere He will deliver them or us from the hour of temptation. So if we endure, pay the price to be established in the faith, shouldn't He allow us to endure that season of temptation as well? To further prove that we are connected to Him? No. Watch this. See this is where the enemy trips us up. Because whenever bad things happen there is a part of us that says I brought that upon me. Right? Trails don't come because you brought it on you. Trails come because of your faith. Your faith attracts it. But your same faith will overcome it.

Now, watch this. Those that are suffering right now and are persevering, Jesus says, "You are becoming stronger and you are preparing yourself, and when it comes time for the temptation, that is going to come on the whole world, when it comes time for that to go down, I am going to deliver you out of that hour."

"You say wait a minute, God, you prepared me for all of this. Why won't You let me go ahead and go through all of that to further prove that I am your son or daughter?"

Watch this. God, in Christ we are not appointed to — wrath— but unto obtain salvation. So if we have prepared ourselves, we won't have to go through the

temptation. We will overcome it. Just hold on. Why will we overcome it instead of being allowed to go through it? We have already allowed faith and patience to perfect us. And these will give us the pass without having to take the final.

I don't have to take the final. Why? I have died to the flesh. That will benefit my faith, my eternal glory. That will benefit me nothing! Zip! I have already proven myself to God. I have already proven by my faith that I am a son of God!

Now, those who want to sleep right now, and run when troubles come, might have to prove their faith by enduring the worst of it, that period of time the world has ever known. There were ten virgins, only five were wise. Only five were prepared. The other five were not prepared. What did they have to do? They had to stand outside and say, "Lord, open up." And He said, "I never knew you."

God is preparing us for deliverance that we are taking advantage of. Let me say that again. God is preparing us for deliverance but we are taking advantage and we are taking advantage of the window of opportunity to be ready for that day when it comes. Why else? I mean, why else? Why trust God, serve God, and go through all the junk we go through because we are associated with God? Why else?!? Because we know in our heart of hearts that we have a reward. God is faithful! He will not only deliver me out of all my afflictions, He is going to give me a reward, if when He comes back He finds me faithful and doing what He called me to do! That is why I do it!!

Turn with me to Luke 4. I mentioned this a few weeks ago. It is like God is just continuing something here. And He will continue it as long as we will be still. But He showed me this in a sermon. It came out of my mouth before I realized it. I was like Peter, "You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God." It came out of my mouth and I said, "Wow! That was fresh!" I like fresh bread.

Do you remember a couple of Wednesday nights ago I said, "Jesus never had to prove Himself as a Son of God to anybody.?" Satan comes to Him and says, "If you be the Son of God turn these stones into bread." The Jews come to Him and say, "You are a blasphemer. If you truly are the Son of God, prove yourself." On the cross they taunted Him. They accused Him and said, "If you are the Son of God, come down. Heal yourself." He had many opportunities of temptations to want to

prove Himself.

Why would the enemy want Jesus to prove Himself? Do you know why we go through trials? I don't know why God let 12 years go by before He told me this. I guess He wanted to see if I would wait around for it. Here is why we go through trials.

I FORGOT. That was so good though. It just left me.

We go through trials because if it is genuine faith, the faith will be revealed as genuine only in the fire. That is the only way to prove genuine faith. Put it in the fire. What do they do with gold that has impurities in it? They put it in the fire. What comes to the top? The dross. Who ever does not make it in the fire comes to the top. Genuine faith stays in the fire and is refined by it. Lives in it. Now look there in, I've already given it to you, Luke chapter 4, verse 1.

1 Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, 2 being tempted for forty days by the devil. And in those days He ate nothing, and afterward, when they had ended, He was hungry. 3 And the devil said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread." 4 But Jesus answered him, saying, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.' " (NKJV)

So, Satan is tempting Jesus over His Sonship. Had Jesus obeyed Satan's attempts, to make Jesus prove Himself, watch this, Jesus would have done so against God's will. It was God's responsibility to vindicate and to authenticate Jesus' identity. Not Jesus'.

Jesus' purpose on earth was to do what the Father said.

Watch. Very easily Jesus could have said, "Turn stone into bread, I can do that without even thinking. I can whip it out! I could create My own bakery up here." But He would have been doing something outside God's will. It would have been sin. He wasn't sent to prove Himself, He was sent to obey God!

Did you know that Jesus never once made an excuse? He never once sacrificed a lamb according to the Law. Why? He was sinless. If you are sinless, it means you have been obedient. If you have been obedient you don't have to make excuses why

you don't do what God said to do. That is why He answered Satan's temptation with the Word of God. Because He knew His identity was connected to the Truth, which is God. Not to His anointing. Jesus would have gone against God's will to prove Himself to Satan.

Have you noticed when you come under attack, that is usually when others try to judge you and condemn you? It is not a coincidence. It is a principle. You want to do something for them to prove that you are still born again.

"You know if you didn't have so much sin in your life you wouldn't be going through all this stuff. You wouldn't have lost your job." So, that is going to inevitably pull you in to proving. How many have fell into that little trap? Huh? That is exactly what he is doing. He is setting you up! He is trying to get you to vert it, to prove yourself. I don't know how many times people have come in here with an attitude of pride and tried to get us to prove we are something. All it was, was an attempt to get us derailed. Are you going to do what God said, or what man wants you to say?

You have to do what God says. But what if they leave? Then they never were yours. One of the apostles said that. John said in 1 John 3:19, if they had been of us, they would not have left us, but because they left, it was made manifest that they were not of us. Isn't that special??

Turn with me to Job 1:7.

7 And the Lord said to Satan, "From where do you come?" So Satan answered the Lord and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it." (NKJV)

The Lord said to Satan, "From where do you come?" As if God didn't know. He goes to the garden and says to Adam, "Adam, where are you?" He doesn't ask questions looking for answers. He is after something. He says, "Where do you come from?"

So Satan answered the Lord and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it."

In other words I am looking for something to eat. Then the Lord says, I've got a meal for you. Have you considered My servant Job? That there is none like him? There is what? None. That makes him a person of his own caliber. That is a pretty high declaration, isn't it? What is the highest honor you can receive in the military?

A medal of honor. Job was the only one with a medal of honor. In all the earth.

8 Then the Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?" (NKJV)

A blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil. Wow! That is high credentials because that is God talking!

9 So Satan answered the Lord and said, "Does Job fear God for nothing? 10 Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. 11 But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!" (NKJV)

But now. He didn't say, "But God." He said, "But now."

But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has. In other words, Job doesn't get his identity from You God, he gets it from the stuff You have given him.

11 But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!"

Satan was convinced that Job was not real! Satan is convinced you are not real. Who cares??

12 And the Lord said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power; only do not lay a hand on his person." So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord. (NKJV)

Talk about boundaries, Dorene. Satan can only go so far. So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord.

God spoke some truths about Job that had to be tried. I have never thought about it like this until last Wednesday when I was preaching from James 1:12. And God just dropped it in my spirit. Those words that God said had to be tried. Let that soak in.

On earth, Job had an issue with fear. It says that, I believe doesn't it, in chapter 2.

"The thing I feared the most, the thing I dreaded, has come upon me."

So up in heaven, God is declaring great things over Job! On earth, Job is in fear. So while God's declarations about Job were being put to the test to see if they were true, Job had to undergo and endure, on earth, the greatest trial of his life. Because Job faced and endured the thing that he feared the most God was vindicated.

Did Job curse God? No. He did not charge God foolishly. Neither did he sin. So the trial proved what God said about Job was true. Are you with me?? Job was delivered. And he proved God to be true. Job as a result of the trial became stronger in his faith and was given double for his loss. Instead of having that fear, he met his fear in faith, and overcame that fear, and he no longer had that fear.

The purpose of that trial that you went through was to get that fear, doubt and unbelief out of you. And once that is dealt with you can go on and have faith and have peace. Here is the other care: God's words were proven true, God was vindicated as being

God and not man that He should lie, because He, now I want you, He's putting, have you ever, watch this, (laughter), it is like it's of-of-of,...

Have you ever spoke on someone else's behalf and said, "You can take them to the bank. They will do you good." Have you ever done that? God said that about Job. You can do whatever you want to up to taking his life, and I guarantee you, I, I, not Job, not Job's animals, I, I guarantee you he will not flip on Me.

How many have ever gone to the bank for somebody, signed the note and then they failed you?

God knew that Job was the real deal. And God knew that his faith could be tested and that he would come out proven that he was a man of God. So, God's word was confirmed as true. God was vindicated. Job was proved as being true. And Job was vindicated. Satan was proven to be a liar once more. He spoke a lie over Job. And only the trial proved Satan to be a liar.

Have you ever had someone to falsely accuse you? And it is like, there goes facebook!

Twitter is ablaze! There goes my reputation! And you just be still, because God will vindicate you. And when it is all said and done, the one who spoke the lie is the one it lands on. That judgment you spoke on us, it is now going to come back on you and reveal you for the liar you are. Yeah.

And Satan departed from God's presence. Yeah, I bet he did! With his butt on fire! Romans 8:24. We are done.

24 For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why

does one still hope for what he sees? (NKJV)

For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; In other words, God when are you going to get us out of this mess? Because I don't see any hope.

24 For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees?

I'm saved. Well, congratulations! You look like you are still stuck in hell here with me. (Laughter). How's that working out for you? You and your, I'm saved? I'm saved. I am not saved until I endure to the end. So let's see which one of these doctrines are going to endure to the end. You who think you have already got it all now or me who says, I've got to, I think it is Matthew chapter 24, Oh, he that endures to the end, the same shall be saved. For if you are hoping for salvation, then you are not saved yet. Now you are redeemed. You have faith. But if you persevere, you will get saved. Noah persevered. He was an honorable man, was he not? He found favor in God's eyes among a heathen generation. Did he have to build that ark, or did he say, "I'm saved." (Laughter) "I'm saved." Are you going to build that ark? No, I'm saved. Alright, let's see how you do when the flood comes.

There is a work that has to be done. You have to prepare yourself for the return. And if you don't endure, well enough of that...

Hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees?

Romans 8:25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance. (NKJV)

But if we hope, here it is, for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with – what? -

Perseverance!!

Boy, we are learning that tonight.

26 Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. (NKJV)

Sometimes you get so deep in the hole you don't know what to pray. You just have to say, "Pray through me, Lord."

27 Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God. (NKJV)

According to what? According to the will of God. In other words, it is going to

work!

28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. (NKJV)

All things. All things work together for the good. To those who love God, to those who are called – to– according to His purpose! Not just saved. You are called according to His purpose!

So, on this path called righteousness, we will all have to face and endure many trials and afflictions. But know this. All trials, temptations, and afflictions have a season. Nothing lasts forever except heaven and hell. Nothing on this earth will last forever. Even the earth is going to be burnt up. Trials, temptations, afflictions all have seasons. When we have passed the test, or, come through victoriously, then the season or the trial will end, and the afflictions will pass away. All that you will take with you is your identity and spiritual authority so that you can use them to take the Promised Land. That is good.

The only thing that I am bringing out of these fiery trials and afflictions is my faith, through my faith, is the authority in Christ and my identity in Christ. And I am going to use that to overcome and to possess. We are getting close. I don't know what we are getting close to, but, we are getting close.