

Pressures of Christianity 03 Faith Under Pressure

by Harry Deutchman

The sermon emphasizes the importance of faith in times of pressure and suffering, highlighting the examples of the Jewish believers and the Old Testament heroes who trusted in God's promises.

Duration: 46:28

Scripture: Hebrews 1:10, Hebrews 3:3, Hebrews 7:24, Hebrews 8:3, Hebrews 10:12, Hebrews 10:32, Hebrews 10:39

Topics: "Faith Under Pressure", "Gods Presence"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the concept of God working behind the scenes in our lives. He emphasizes that even though we may not always see or feel God's presence, He is constantly at work. The preacher uses examples from the Bible, such as the forty days Jesus spent proving His resurrection, to illustrate this point. He also highlights the importance of faith and endurance in times of trouble, reminding listeners that God hears their cries and has a boundless love for His children. The sermon concludes with the assurance that God is always present, even when things seem contrary, and encourages listeners to rejoice and trust in His plan.

Transcript

We are continuing our study in the epistle to the Hebrews, and just as a stone is thrown into a body of water, making an ever-widening circle, so the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ is seen in this epistle in an ever-widening theme. For instance, in the first chapter, we have noticed in verses two and three the person of Christ and the work of Christ. And there we have seen in verse two, we've noticed that he was appointed heir of all things.

He is the Son, he is the very Creator and the Reflector and the Upholder. As well as in his work, he purged us, in verse three, he purged us from our sin and sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. Then in verse four and in chapter eight, verse six, again the person and work of Christ is mentioned.

Verse four of chapter one, being made so much better than the angels, he has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. So in this person he is superior to the angels as well as to every known individual in the Old Testament whom God was pleased to use. And in chapter eight, verse six, not only is he superior in this person, for he has a more excellent name, but his ministry in verse eight, six, is more excellent because it is a better covenant.

Now what the Spirit of God is pleased to give us is a focusing our attention on that man, that man. And we notice in chapter three and verse three, the first scripture. In 3.3 we read, For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honor than the house.

Then will you notice in 7.24, again it focuses our attention on this man. Verse 24 of chapter seven, But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. And then will you notice again, he is mentioned in chapter eight and verse three, For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts of sacrifice.

Wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer. And the Spirit of God will not allow us to take our mind nor our attention away from this man. So we notice in chapter ten and verse twelve, he is mentioned again.

But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God. So it's this man, this man, this man, this man. What about this man? As in 1.4, he has a superior name, exalting his personage, and in 8.6 he performed a superior work.

Therefore in these four verses concerning this man, it speaks about his person and his work. Then I want you to notice in chapter ten and verse twelve, it tells us that the person is superior, and therefore the work has been accepted. But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God.

How wonderful is that faithful spirit has been sent to glorify the Lord Jesus. And over and over again, like in chapter one and verse three, he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. And in chapter 9.24, it tells us that he entered into the presence of God.

So he entered in and he sat down. And in 10.12, again we are told that he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. Now these Jewish Christians suffered.

Oh how they suffered. When we were in Israel, we met Jewish believers and Arab believers, and strange as it might sound, the Arab believers also suffered. They suffered from their people because of standing by and encouraging the Jewish believer and having fellowship with him.

We were in Arab homes, we were in Jewish homes of like precious faith, and being that a friend of ours has been there for 25 years, she took us to places where others would not have gotten in. And there we saw that they suffered financially, they suffered even physically. And one of the bodyguards of Ben-Gurion who came to know the Lord, the Jewish Defense League from New York went over as a group, and his was one of the places that were destroyed.

He distributed Bibles and sent them to Russia, sent them throughout the Middle East, and others were thrown out of their jobs, not knowing which way to turn. We had the privilege as well as others of ministering to them because they are cast on the Lord. So these Jewish believers in that day suffered like persecution.

And there in chapter 10 and verse 32 on, we read of what they suffered. And in 10-32, we notice, but call to remembrance the former days in which after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of affliction, partly whilst ye were made a gazing stop, both by reproaches and afflictions, and partly whilst ye became companions of them that were so used. For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance.

And then he goes on to encourage them by saying in verse 39, But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul. So he amplifies that which he had just mentioned, and shows in the honor roll of faith how men and women under duress and under pressure did not turn back. And the dominant theme is by faith, by faith, by faith, by faith.

And the Spirit of God repeats it over and over and over and over again. Why? That no matter how hard a rock might be, a constant drop of water on it will finally make an impression. And so upon the harried, worried minds of those Jewish believers, and the constriction within them, by bringing it forth that by faith they endured, by faith they came forth victoriously, that it might make that impression on their minds.

So it is amplified in chapter 11. Now you remember this faith chapter, I am sure. Now faith is the substance of things hoped for.

That is, faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. That is to say, the reason why they have the evidence of it in these Old Testament days, these heroes of faith, was through testing, through trial, it became real to them. That which they had in their souls that gave them assurance came to the fore under trial and testing.

Even though they had not seen it with the eye of sense, perception, yet they had proof of it while they went through the testing, because the Lord was real to them. And the whole chapter brings out this, that faith did not rest in circumstances. Faith rested in God himself.

And so we notice in verse 2, for by it the elders obtained a good report. Now who are these elders? You find the answer to the question in verse 39. In verse 2, for by it the elders obtained a good report.

Well, in verse 39, and these all having obtained a good report, the same phrase as in verse 2, and these all having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise. All these who are listed in chapter 11 are called the elders. And the reason why the word elder is used is to convey that they were mature in their faith.

They were seasoned in their faith. They were settled in their faith. In 1 John, the second chapter, we read, I write unto you children, because your sins have been forgiven you.

Ye know that, and ye know the Father, therefore they were the babies. I write unto you young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one. Then he says, I write unto you fathers, for ye have known him who is from the unbegun beginning.

So here the word elders, one who was full-orbed in faith. Now we see it right here, they received a good report through faith. Then we notice that the first thing is mentioned is the creation.

Through faith we understand that the ages were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. Faith saw beyond a physical creation, and behind it saw the architect who brought it all to pass. Therefore, there was a maker.

He was the cause of it all. So by faith they believed that God created the ages and planted them. Now we would think in the course of human history, the first one that should have been mentioned was Adam, but he was not mentioned at all.

He did not live by faith, therefore the Spirit of God excludes him, and Abel is brought to the fore. I want you to notice that Enoch is brought to the fore, Noah is brought to the fore, and Abraham is brought to the fore. Why these four to begin with? First of all, when we think of Enoch, verse five tells us he was translated.

Therefore, Enoch was taken up, and he was no more, for God took him because he was pleasing unto God. Then we read about Noah. By faith Noah warned God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared Enoch to the saving of his house, by which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

Therefore, as Enoch was taken up in the midst of all the catastrophe that took place, the flood that was to come, Noah was shut in. I am sure if you were sure of being caught up in the time of trouble, or shut in away from the trouble, you and I would have evidence as to why we should believe God. So in order to show us that in spite of not being caught up, in spite of not being shut in, Abraham is brought to the fore.

And we read in verse eight, by faith Abraham when he was called, and when he was called he was not called to go up, he was not called to be shut in, but by faith Abraham when he was called, he was called to do what? Go out. And not only to go out, but to go out into a place which he should ask to receive for an inheritance, and he obeyed. But when he went out, he did not know exactly where he was to go when he was to go out.

He knew of the area, but he didn't know of the particular place or what would be awaiting him. So Abraham was not to be caught up, Abraham was not to be shut in, but Abraham was to be exposed to all the pressures that might be awaiting him, not knowing exactly what it might be. Therefore we read that he obeyed, and he went out not knowing whether he went.

You know, with regard to Abel, we see here that Abel offered a sacrifice, and the reason why he offered that sacrifice over against Cain who refused to do so, is because he believed God, that God was righteous, and therefore he offered what God expected of him. So we see in Abel that he is offering a sacrifice. We see in Noah that there was an act of obedience.

We see in Enoch that there was a life of fellowship. But when we come to Abraham, he supersedes them all. There was a life of fellowship, and there was an act of obedience, and there was a sacrifice.

In what way does Abraham exceed both, that is, Abel, Enoch, and Noah? In the fact that they, that is, Abel, Enoch, and Noah, counted God righteous by believing him, walking with him, one being taken up, the other being shut in, one being murdered. But here, when it came to Abraham, he exceeded them in this, that he was going to justify God by being obedient to him, even though it seemed that what God would ask him to do would be unrighteous. He was going to justify God's seeming unrighteousness.

That is the greatest faith of all. When it does not seem to make sense, when logic has been thrown to the wind, when we hear by the word of God, by the preaching of it, by the circumstances in which we find ourselves, by feeding on the word of God, and somehow we are thrown in circumstances that does not seem to be right, and God seems to be unfair. It was in this fear that Abraham was going to justify God.

Where do we find it? Here's where we find it. Verse seventeen of chapter eleven, By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac. And he that had received the promises, that is, Abraham, offered up his only begotten son, in whom all the promises were vested, of whom it was said that in Isaac shall thy seed be called.

And he was going to offer him deliberately because it was God's will. Why did he do so? Because in justifying God's seeming unrighteousness, he knew that God would justify himself in what he asked. That's why, verse nineteen, accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from whence also he received him in sort of a parable, when another offering instead of Isaac was provided.

So you see, beloved, Abraham's faith shines, shines and outshines the others, and yet the Lord blesses Noah, the Lord blesses Abel, even though he is dead yet he speaks, and the Lord blesses Noah enough, puts him in the honor roll of faith, where Abraham is also mentioned. And as we go on, we notice that the nation finally is in Egypt, consisting of seventy souls, and then they multiply and they amplify. And the reason why God kept them in Egypt for approximately four hundred years was due to the fact that this straggling, straggling few souls was going to be hammered into being a nation.

And although they were in that bondage for four hundred years, at the same time they gained knowledge as to how a nation should function from political and other viewpoints, only it was refined and sanctified by God's mind. So he was forging a nation right in the midst of a glorious nation that was ungodly, and they were there. As they were in bondage, we notice in verse twenty-three, concerning Moses.

By faith, Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because he was a proper child, and they were not afraid of the king's commandment, which command was to kill all the male children. By faith, Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the sons of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Then it goes on in verse twenty-six, that he compared the glories and riches of Egypt with a city whose builder and maker is God.

He compared the riches of Egypt having a very uncertain, unstable foundation, and he looked for a city which hath foundations. And as he weighed it all, verse twenty-six tells us, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. For he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.

Then we notice, through faith he kept the Passover. And as I mentioned a few years ago, six or seven years ago when I was here, and touched on this eleventh chapter, we notice in verse twenty-three, he. And then again in verse twenty-four, he.

And then again in verse twenty-six, for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. And verse twenty-seven, he forsook Egypt. Again in that verse, for he endured as seeing him who was invisible.

And before I go any further, I want you to notice in verse thirty-two of chapter ten, ye endured a great fight of affliction. Verse thirty-four, the reason why ye endured is because you believe that in heaven you have a better and an enduring substance. So he carries out the theme of enduring, and enduring faith in verse twenty-seven.

For he endured as seeing him who is invisible. Child of God, especially we, I put myself in because, yes, I'm a senior citizen in a couple of months, but one look by the Spirit of God upon the Son of God, then you can go to hell itself rejoicingly. Just one look, that's all.

And it has paid off in dividend. It has paid off one look, and that's all that is necessary. That is why in verse twenty-seven, for he endured, why? As seeing him, he saw him, he who was invisible.

A blessed truth is this, that the Lord Jesus Christ, after he arose from the grave, was going to show himself for forty days by many infallible proofs. And so in first Corinthians fifteen, it shows us that he was

manifested toward one, then another, then another, then a few more, then about five hundred brethren, or above five hundred brethren. So it shows us that he manifested himself, then he receives.

And then he manifests himself again, and he receives. And manifests himself again, and then receives. And finally, he has taken up, and in the ascension, he sits down on the right hand of the Father, assuring us, whether it's a mobile home, or a piece of ground, or money that's needed to seal the transaction, and we steal, and we bubble, and we go to pot, and we're under the heat, and everything seems to be contrary.

Where is he? He is behind the scenes. Yes, rejoice, laugh over it. He is behind the scenes.

Oh, how I used to fret, we Jewish people. Our nature is to have security, to have money, to have everything, to drown out that of which we consciously are not aware, and that is the fear within, of not having a rest in place for the soul of our foot. And so, as years went on, how gloriously he ridden me of that by giving me himself.

How precious. Where is he? He's behind the scenes. Just as sure as I am standing here, and you're sitting there, he's behind the scenes.

How do we know for forty days he gave infallible proof that he is there, and yet behind the scenes? Then I want you to notice, as we go on. They watched one man. You know it's hard when you're in trouble, whatever it might be, and here they were in bondage, and they cried.

And as soon as we cry, the Lord hears, and the word tells us, he had respect unto the children of Israel because of the unconditional covenant. They sighed, they were weary, and there was music to his ears, for as a mother does not feel fulfilled unless she has a child depending on her, and there comes up within her the greatest and the most boundless love that any mother can give because the child needs her. So here, the child needed him.

So, there is a people suffering, and when you suffer, you're not concerned so much about others. You are not concerned even about their Christian life or testimony. You're so centered in the suffering that engages your thinking and feeling that everything is blocked out, even the Son of God himself, but the thing to which you are passing.

And so, he did this, he did that, he did the other, he did that, and it was so God-centered that eventually a people suffering began to watch one man in spite of all the difficulty showing that God is, and he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. And as they watched him, do you know what happened? No longer he, he, he, he, and it's mentioned, oh, about six times there, but look at verse 29. By faith, what is the next word? They.

They. No longer he, but they. It was one man by the Spirit of God who was able to captivate a nation suffering anguish.

That one man brought them all together, and it was they who passed through the Red Sea. You never realize that although you're confined acreage-wise or mile-wise in a confined area, what your life and my life can mean when it is God-centered and Spirit-controlled. There are so many who are suffering, and some say, well, it's in their mind.

Some say because of their childhood. But regardless as to what the process, the individual is suffering and needs encouragement until they are able to look to him who is born for their pain. And so we see it, they pass through the Red Sea.

Child of God, there is not one of us here who has not failed somewhere in the Christian life. We have. And what we read in Psalm 23 too, he makes me to lie down in green pastures.

Some of us say, oh no, it's thorny, it's rough, it hurts, and there are guilt feelings. But you know, Child of God, I have read somewhere concerning the churchyard where there was a sundial. And on that sundial there is written these words, I record none but the cloudless days.

Those days when the sun is shining, that's what is recorded on the sundial. Not the cloudy days, not the gray days, not the failure days, no, but the cloudless days. And yet a cloud hangs over our minds and our hearts because we have failed as Satan constantly conjures up these things and would produce guilt feelings so we will not rejoice in him who in spite of our failure is ever on the right hand of the Father, ever living to make intercession for us.

Along that line when I read about the sundial, it's only the cloudless days that are recorded. It's only the cloudless days where we can see and read time and move on. Then I was thinking of Israel.

As she came out from Egypt into the wilderness, she came to Kadesh Barnea. And as she came there, spies were sent in to spy off the land. The majority of them came back with an evil report saying the men are like giants, etc.

It's impossible and they weaken the will of the people. Then there was Joshua and Caleb and they came back with a good report and they showed the cluster of grapes and in spite of it they were discouraged. It was at Kadesh Barnea because the people believed the evil report that they began to wander.

And as they wandered for approximately 38-39 years, they finally came back to Kadesh Barnea and finally they went into the promised land. At a place of failure, there was victory. They finally went in.

You may have failed, child of God, and don't let the enemy of your soul in your declining years in this pilgrimage journey distress and disturb you. And the comforting, comforting my people, speak ye comfortably and say thus saith your God, and by the Spirit of God through me he wants to comfort you. Comfort you so that you will lie down in green pastures.

And the comfort is this, that in the record, there is no record of their years of wandering. It's absolutely wiped out. That is why when we come to Hebrews 11, after coming to the Red Sea as by dry land, it skips their wanderings and it says, it puts them already in the land, see.

It leaves the wanderings out. And it says, by faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were accomplished about seven days. Isn't that beautiful? Oh, our God of grace and full of mercy, long-suffering, how incomparable, how wonderful he is.

When I think of my years, twenty years of having been backslidden, again in the skid row, only no longer in California but in Texas. Those years, what about them? They are not on his record. They are not there.

How wonderful, how marvelous. And here we notice the same thing. Then we say to ourselves, as the various parts of our body, the brain, the muscles, the organs, gradually become weaker and weaker.

We say to ourselves, oh, how wonderful to hear these truths. But will I at that moment keep on rejoicing? Oh, yes, you will. How can I be so sure? Look at Hebrews chapter one.

In Hebrews and chapter one, I want you to notice, we read here in verse ten, And thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou remainest, and they all shall wax old as doth a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed. But thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.

And I love that illustration that I read. When we see a great work of art, whether it be in painting, whether it be in architecture, whatever it might be, that thing still remains. That work of art still remains.

But the creator of that work has, in the meantime, died. What we read here is this, that the creation is the work of the Lord our God. And even though the creation may be folded up and done away with, and it becomes a new creation, then what about Him? He outlives His creation, and being that He outlives His creation, you are His creation, both by nature as well as by redemption.

The creation might go, finally go back to the dust, but being that He outlives the creation, it says, because I live, ye shall live also. Isn't that wonderful? Isn't that a reason for rejoicing? Oh death, where is thy sting? I can't do anything. Beautiful, and I'm making up for keeping you longer yesterday morning by closing right now.

Our Heavenly Father, our hearts rejoice in the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty. But there is one thing that the angels left out because they could not, for they knew not, and that is grace, grace, grace to the God Almighty.

We praise Father, we praise Son, we praise the blessed Spirit of God. Oh our Father, rejoicingly do we take ourselves out of other hands and put ourselves into thy hands. No, we are closer than that.

We are an integral part of thy very body. So glorify thyself after the remaining days that thou hast allotted thy servant to be with thy people. Magnify thyself so that they will rejoice in him and in him alone.

We ask it our Father in Jesus' name and for his sake, amen.

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