

The Way Out of Impossible Circumstances

Welcome/Prayer

Foreword

Our message in this series continues to focus on the book of Exodus. When the Israelites, recently released from slavery, reached the banks of the Red Sea, the waters miraculously parted so they could cross. But as the Egyptian army pursued, the waters returned to normal and the soldiers, horses, and chariots were swept away. In response, Moses and the Israelites burst forth into the song of praise recorded in Exodus 15. Were it not for the way out of their circumstances that God provided, the Israelites would not have been able to testify to the promise God had made—and kept—with them.

Introduction

As we have learned throughout this series on Exodus, our God can and will provide us a “way out” of anything and everything that holds us captive. From this story of God’s glorious triumph over Pharaoh’s army, we discover that even includes a “way out of impossible circumstances.”

Preparation

Read the following text related to today’s message:

Exodus 15:1-6 (NLT)

Then Moses and the people of Israel sang this song to the Lord:

“I will sing to the Lord,
for he has triumphed gloriously;
he has hurled both horse and rider
into the sea.
² The Lord is my strength and my song;
he has given me victory.
This is my God, and I will praise him—
my father’s God, and I will exalt him!
³ The Lord is a warrior;
Yahweh is his name!
⁴ Pharaoh’s chariots and army
he has hurled into the sea.
The finest of Pharaoh’s officers
are drowned in the Red Sea.
⁵ The deep waters gushed over them;
they sank to the bottom like a stone.
⁶ “Your right hand, O Lord,
is glorious in power.
Your right hand, O Lord,
smashes the enemy.”

Break it Down

The Israelites were overcome by God’s mercy and His deliverance. They thought they could handle any situation, but God knew better. Looking at what seemed to be impossible circumstances the Israelites were facing, we can apply the lessons they learned to our own lives. That’s good news for us because there are some situations we face in life that are simply more than we can handle...humanly speaking. Let’s review what lessons we can learn from the story of the Red Sea crossing.

The Lord knows what we are prepared for and what we are *not* prepared for.

God sees our journey from beginning to end. Only the Lord knows the safest and most suitable route for us to take when we face impossible circumstances. His may not be the shortest or the most enjoyable route (e.g., the Israelites' journey through the wilderness); but, we demonstrate our faith and obedience when we trust His wisdom and follow His guidance and direction.

1. Consider a time that you were in an "impossible circumstance." How do you now see that God was preparing you for something else?
2. How have you been able to use your impossible circumstances to minister to others?

We have an enemy who will not let us go without a fight.

The Israelites' adversary was Pharaoh; ours is named Satan, and his goal is to destroy believers. Whether you're a new believer or long-standing Christian, you're going to experience attacks from the enemy and attempts to haul you into captivity.

1. Where are you most vulnerable to Satan's attacks or feel weak to his temptations?
2. How do you overcome giving in to the enemy's fight?
3. Share about a time that you felt the Lord's presence or strength when resisting the enemy's attacks.

God sometimes leads us into uncomfortable places in order to save us.

The Israelites' precarious position beside the Red Sea was clearly part of God's sovereign plan. He intentionally led them there to gain glory and to show the Egyptians that He is Lord: "I will gain honor by my victory...and...the Egyptians will know that I am the Lord." (Exodus 14:17b-18 GNT). Sometimes, we find ourselves in similar dead-end situations; when we feel hemmed in on all sides, we often become so uncomfortable that we are finally willing to let go and let God take control of our lives. God is more concerned about developing our character than He is about making us comfortable.

1. Describe a time that you felt you were at the "end of your rope" or when you hit "rock bottom."
2. How did God show you the way out of that uncomfortable place?
3. What lesson(s) did you learn from your experience?

When we find ourselves in impossible circumstances, we have two options...

...To go back.

The Israelites' consideration of returning to Egypt—to where they had been enslaved for 430 years—demonstrates this "go back" response. When our circumstances seem impossible to face, we, too, can be tempted to return to what's comfortable (e.g., destructive behavior/sin). Instead of focusing on our plight, we must turn away from it and turn toward the God that stands ready to help us.

1. When have you "gone back" to a situation because the alternative seemed too difficult or too fearful to face?
2. Describe some examples of how Satan uses our fears to tempt us to go back to old ways.

Or, to go on.

God's instruction for the Israelites was to *keep going* (ref. Exodus 15:14), despite their fear of the approaching Egyptians, and they were miraculously saved when they trusted Him. When we find ourselves in impossible circumstances, we are to take the same posture of faith—keep trusting, keep asking, and watch for a miracle.

1. What miracles has God demonstrated in your life or in the lives of your friends/family?
2. How has God rewarded you for your faithful obedience when your circumstances seemed impossible to face alone?

God is our all in all and will provide a “way out.”

God truly is Jehovah-Jireh, which means “the Lord will provide.” It may not be quite as spectacular a demonstration as what He did for the Israelites, but God can do for us today what He did for them.

1. Where have you experienced God’s provisions?
2. When have you seen a powerful demonstration of God’s love/mercy in your life?

Conclusion

When we find ourselves in impossible circumstances, we should apply the lessons we learned from the Israelites. If God could rescue Jesus from the grave, He can surely show us the “way out.”

Close in Prayer