

## GOT FAITH?

### **What We've Seen About Faith So Far:**

#### **Five Quick Stories**

Luke 4:14-30 (Hometown)

Luke 5:17-26 (4 Friends)

Luke 7:1-10 (Centurion)

Luke 7:36-50 (Prostitute)

Luke 8:1-21 (Good Soil)

### **Sometimes the Soil Needs**

#### **A Little Work:**

Luke 8:22-25

Obedience can lead us out of or into storms.

Storms reveal who we are and who God is.

It's not the amount of our faith; it's the object of our faith that matters most.

Faith is trusting God enough to do what he says.

### **Sometimes The Good Soil Is Where**

#### **We Least Expect It:**

Luke 8:26-39

It couldn't get any worse: pigs, tombs, demons, nakedness.

God's authority brings freedom, not bondage or oppression.

Faith begins with accepting a "no" to our plans and desires.

# Growth Group Homework

For the week of February 13, 2011

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## QUICK REVIEW

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

## MY STORY

1. Can you think of any times in your life when doing the right thing (obeying God)...

...led you into a storm?

...led you out of a storm?

2. We hear this phrase quoted by many in our culture today in a variety of difficult or confusing situations: "Everything happens for a reason." How accurate do you think this statement is?

3. How has your understanding and experience of God's authority bringing freedom ebbed and flowed in your spiritual journey?

## DIGGING DEEPER

1. As mentioned above, a phrase people often quote to help deal with the storm they are experiencing is "everything happens for a reason," and then they quote Romans 8:28. All things do happen for a reason, but they may not be the reasons we think. What do the following verses tell us about why certain storms happen?

### **Deuteronomy 28:1-2**

*If you fully obey the Lord your God and carefully follow all his commands I give you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations on earth. [2] All these blessings will come upon you*

and accompany you if you obey the Lord your God: [NIV]

**Deuteronomy 28:15**

However, if you do not obey the Lord your God and do not carefully follow all his commands and decrees I am giving you today, all these curses will come upon you and overtake you: [NIV]

**Hebrews 12:7-8**

Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? [8] If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons. [NIV]

**Proverbs 22:3**

A prudent man sees danger and takes refuge,  
but the simple keep going and suffer for it. [NIV]

**1 Peter 5:8**

Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. [NIV]

2. This week we heard how God's authority brings freedom, not bondage or oppression. How do the following verses expand what freedom in Christ means and the responsibility that comes with it?

**John 8:31-36**

To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. [32] Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

[33] They answered him, "We are Abraham's descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?"

[34] Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. [35] Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. [36] So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. [NIV]

**Galatians 5:1**

It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. [NIV]

**Galatians 5:13-15**

You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love. [14] The entire law is summed up in a single command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." [15] If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other. [NIV]

**Romans 6:18-19**

You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.

[19] I put this in human terms because you are weak in your natural selves. Just as you used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer them in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness. [NIV]

3. Even when we go to God in the midst of a storm, his timing and how he delivers may be different than what we expect. What do the following verses have to say about God's "just in time" delivery system?

**John 14:26-27**

*But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. [27] Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. [NIV]*

**Isaiah 55:8-11**

*"For my thoughts are not your thoughts,  
neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord.*

*[9] "As the heavens are higher than the earth,  
so are my ways higher than your ways  
and my thoughts than your thoughts.*

*[10] As the rain and the snow  
come down from heaven,  
and do not return to it*

*without watering the earth  
and making it bud and flourish,*

*so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater,  
[11] so is my word that goes out from my mouth:*

*It will not return to me empty,  
but will accomplish what I desire  
and achieve the purpose for which I sent it. [NIV]*

**Isaiah 59:1-2**

*Surely the arm of the Lord is not too short to save,  
nor his ear too dull to hear.*

*[2] But your iniquities have separated  
you from your God;*

*your sins have hidden his face from you,  
so that he will not hear. [NIV]*

**Matthew 18:20**

*For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them." [NIV]*

Have any of these been more helpful to you than others when it comes to surviving the storm? Are there any you need to increase?

## **TAKING IT HOME**

⇒ We heard this week that storms reveal who we are. Is there anything in your life that's being revealed in the midst of a storm? Anything you'd like to change?

⇒ Looking back at this week's sermon and study, is there anything you'd like prayer for?