

## **BACKING UP THE BOAT** **Good News For The Weak & Doubting**

### **A Weird Story, Another Miracle**

Mark 9:1-29 – Matthew 17:1-20 – Luke 9:28-43

### **Good News For The Weak & Struggling**

(1) When we honestly search for God and walk in humble and struggling **OBEDIENCE**, God meets us in our **DOUBTS**.

Mark 9:23-27/ Luke 17:5-6/ John 20:24-29/ Acts 12:1-17

(2) When we become **ARROGANT** and **CYNICAL**,  
God stops **SHOWING UP**.

Mark 8:11-13/ Luke 18:9-14

(3) If we want God to **BACK UP THE BOAT**,  
we have to stay in **THE BOAT**.

Psalms 119:21/ Romans 7:21-25/ Proverbs 4:18-19/ Romans 1:18-32

(4) It started with our **SALVATION**.

Romans 3:10-12/ Romans 5:8-10

(5) We will **ALWAYS** get what we **NEED**.

We won't always get what we **WANT**.

1 Corinthians 10:13/ Philippians 2:12-13/ Mark 9:2, 9-10

## Food for Thought for the week of July 14, 2019 (Questions and Scriptures for further study)

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(NIV = New International Version)

1. Larry mentioned that God's power and strength are shown best in our weakness. The apostle Paul wrote about how he learned this lesson in 2 Corinthians. What do the following passages teach us about relying on God's strength rather than our own?

*2 Corinthians 4:7-12 - <sup>7</sup> But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. <sup>8</sup> We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; <sup>9</sup> persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. <sup>10</sup> We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. <sup>11</sup> For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may also be revealed in our mortal body. <sup>12</sup> So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you.*

*2 Corinthians 12:7-10 - <sup>7</sup> or because of these surpassingly great revelations. Therefore, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. <sup>8</sup> Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. <sup>9</sup> But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. <sup>10</sup> That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.*

2. Larry talked about how it is our connectedness, not our giftedness, that is critical for seeing God work in people's lives. In John 15, Jesus uses a vineyard analogy to give us a great picture of staying connected to God and his power, in order to live an abundant life. How might John 15:1-12 help you stay connected in your relationship with Jesus?

*John 15:1-12 - <sup>1</sup> "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. <sup>2</sup> He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. <sup>3</sup> You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. <sup>4</sup> Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. <sup>5</sup> "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. <sup>6</sup> If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. <sup>7</sup> If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. <sup>8</sup> This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. <sup>9</sup> "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. <sup>10</sup> If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. <sup>11</sup> I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. <sup>12</sup> My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.*

3. When we're weak and doubting, it can be a challenge to view life from God's perspective. The apostle Paul was consistently able to maintain a long-term perspective despite facing many trials. What do you see in 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 that helps explain how he was able to consistently choose an eternal perspective in the face of those difficulties?

*2 Corinthians 4:16-18 - <sup>16</sup> Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. <sup>17</sup> For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. <sup>18</sup> So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.*

Paul mentions his "light and momentary troubles." In 2 Corinthians 11:21-29, he lists some of the challenges. How do you think he was able to describe the things he lists as "light and momentary"?

*2 Corinthians 11:21-29 - <sup>21</sup> To my shame I admit that we were too weak for that! Whatever anyone else dares to boast about—I am speaking as a fool—I also dare to boast about. <sup>22</sup> Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they Abraham's descendants? So am I. <sup>23</sup> Are they servants of Christ? (I am out of my mind to talk like this.) I am more. I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. <sup>24</sup> Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. <sup>25</sup> Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was pelted with stones, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, <sup>26</sup> I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my fellow Jews, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false believers. <sup>27</sup> I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked. <sup>28</sup> Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches. <sup>29</sup> Who is weak, and I do not feel weak? Who is led into sin, and I do not inwardly burn?*