

What Should We Do?

Jeremiah 42; 1-22

5/11/03

Intro

- Happy Mother's Day (carnations at the end of the service.
- (Remember to introduce your mother!)

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At this point in the scriptures, the exile to Babylon is finished and the Lord is teaching us through the events that happened to those who remained in the land.

Some might have thought that those who remained were the fortunate ones. But Jeremiah shows us it didn't go well for them.

At this point, Gedaliah, the Jewish leader established by Nebuchadnezzar, has been killed and there is real fear about what Babylon will do when they find out.

So they come to Jeremiah asking him to inquire of the Lord on their behalf. **What should they do?** Should they go back to Egypt or stay?

There is much insight in these verses for us because we often wonder what we should do.

These verses give us insight into asking the Lord for direction in our lives.

I. Truly want God's opinion

A. Ask how you should walk

Vs 3

- this is the right thing to do
- if we would only do this more often

However, many people make up their minds and then ask God about it.

Illus – Ahab and Micaiah. II Kings 22: 13-18

B. Whether pleasant or unpleasant

Vs 6

- Sometimes the Lord asks us to do something that isn't pleasant
- Are we only willing to do those things that we don't want to do, simply because the Lord asks us to?
- Sometimes the things that are best for us are those things that are unpleasant.

C. That it would go well with you

- Many people believe they shouldn't sin because "God said so," or because it might hurt God.
- God doesn't want us to sin because it hurts us!!!

II. Wait for the Lord

Vs 7 – they had to wait 10 days for the answer.

A. Fools rush in ...

- ...where angels fear to tread
- How many times have we looked back and wished we had just waited a little while longer and considered more carefully

Illus – this is why they have provisions in certain contracts that you can get out of them within three days, i.e. buying a car.

B. “Wait on the Lord”

- This is a common biblical concept meaning to seek after the Lord, or wait for His answer while you seek His face.

Lamentations 3:25, “The Lord is good to those who wait for Him, to the person who seeks Him.”

- We often do our best maturing while we wait for the Lord

Illus – Sometimes when we get into trouble, we cry out to God, but He doesn’t save us right away. I believe this is when we do our best maturing. Sometimes God lets us marinate in our problems in the maturing process.

- He strengthens us when we wait on the Lord

Isaiah 40:31 “Yet those who wait for the Lord will gain new strength; they will mount with wings like eagles. They will run and not get tired, they will walk and not faint.”

C. Keep your finger off the scale

- The best way to make a decision before the Lord is to be in a place where you know it will be ok either way.
- They had made their decision and then asked for it to be authorized.

Illus – I’ve done it. When I came up with my own plan for getting through bile school and then asked God to sign off on it.

III. Don’t go back to Egypt

Some decisions have already been addressed in scripture, like whether they should go back to Egypt.

But this is one that we often struggle with.

A. It starts with looking back

- Egypt for us is picture of the world

Illus- Lot’s wife looked back even though they were all told not to do this.

- We too become neutralized when we start yearning for the old days.
- When we think life was better back there

Illus – Israel had been looking to Egypt for many years.

B. Our memories are faulty

- Satan will try to remind you of the ecstasy, but not the agony of the world

Illus – Israel would remember the “melons, cucumbers, garlic, and onions. They were slaves!!

C. Only in the Lord are we fulfilled

- When we don’t feel worthy we start looking back.

Illus – Peter didn’t feel worthy and decided to go back to fishing!

Illus – He fished ALL NIGHT and caught nothing, but when the Lord appeared He said, “Children, you don’t have any fish do you?”

But in the Lord He found what he was seeking, and it was even cooked.

- Jesus gave him the very thing he craved, but if you go back, you’ll get the very thing you fear!!

Conclusion

Going back to Egypt is a decision we face each and every week. Now is the time to decide to be fulfilled in the Lord and not look back to Egypt any more.