

## **Facing Your Darkest Hour**

Outline - July 14th, 2024

Matthew 11:3-11; Mark 6:17-29; Philippians 1:21-25

### **Falling And Failing Are Realities For Many**

#### **I. How falls and failures occur**

- A. Sometimes it's our own doing
  - 1. Pride
  - 2. Arrogance
  - 3. Laziness
  - 4. Bad decisions
  - 5. Neglect, irresponsible behavior
- B. Sometimes it's the result of someone else
  - 1. Negligence of others
  - 2. Violence
  - 3. Deception
- C. Sometimes "life happens"
  - 1. Poor economy
  - 2. Bad weather
  - 3. Contagious diseases
- D. Sometimes expectations fall and fail
- E. Failures replace success
- F. Many go into an existential crisis
- G. When we lose what we are living for we are thrown into a crisis

#### **II. Ten things I know about life**

- A. Life is given by God for a purpose to know Him and to make Him known
  - 1. Made by God
  - 2. Made for God
- B. In fulfilling your purpose you will be scarred, hurt, and life will not be fair
  - 1. Joseph
  - 2. Jesus
  - 3. Paul all carried scars
- C. If you want a scar-free life
  - 1. Do nothing

- 2. Say nothing
- 3. Be nothing
- 4. Change nothing
- 5. Give nothing
- 6. Love nothing
- 7. Have nothing

- D. In this life you will enjoy blessing as you serve
  - 1. But you will face persecution
  - 2. But count it all as joy
  - 3. You are achieving and accomplishing
- E. You will be loved and hated in this world
- F. Growing in faith is your greatest asset
  - 1. Many will leave
  - 2. Things will leave
  - 3. Freedom may leave
  - 4. But if faith stays strong, we will overcome
- G. Testing is a reality as it prepares us for new opportunities
  - 1. Jesus was tested
  - 2. Paul was tested
- H. Loosen your grip on what doesn't matter  
Helps you to hold on to what does
  - 1. His promises
  - 2. His plan
  - 3. His provision
- I. Reality doesn't bend to your schedule
- J. One day you will face your darkest hour
  - 1. Life gives way
  - 2. Breath ceases
  - 3. Transition to His glorious light

### **III. The life of John the Baptist**

- A. A relative of Jesus
- B. He is mentioned in all four gospels
- C. Baptized Jesus
- D. Last prophet before Jesus
- E. Forerunner/Proclaimer of Jesus
- F. Preached to soldiers, tax collectors, and others
- G. Had disciples
- H. Declared Jesus Lamb of God
- I. Declared Jesus must increase and he must decrease
- J. Mentioned by Jewish historian Josephus

### **IV. The Crisis of John the Baptist**

- A. He rebuked a “king” Herod
  - 1. Herod ruled over Galilee
    - a. Left his wife
    - b. Married his sister in law
    - c. Who was also his niece
- B. Persecuted by a queen
  - 1. She wanted the severed head of John the Baptist
- C. In a dungeon facing his darkest hour
- D. Not understanding how this was happening
- E. He begins to doubt, he asks, “Are you the one or do we look for another?”

### **V. The response of Jesus**

- A. The blind receive sight
- B. The lame walk
- C. The lepers are cleansed
- D. The deaf hear
- E. The dead are raised
- F. The poor hear the gospel preached
- G. The point of Jesus
  - 1. Facts define our faith
  - 2. Fulfilled prophecy defines our faith
  - 3. What Jesus has done defines our faith
  - 4. Circumstances do not define our faith

### **VI. The darkest hour of John the Baptist**

- A. The executioner's sword fell upon the neck of John the Baptist
- B. Placed on a platter
- C. As a promise to his wife's daughter
- D. To shut up a prophet
- E. What seemed like a life that failed was really a life fulfilled
  - 1. He proclaimed
  - 2. He baptized
  - 3. He declared Jesus

### **VII. The transition from darkness to light**

- A. He was taken into Paradise
- B. Instant life of joy and beauty
- C. Glorious light, majestic splendor
- D. In the presence of God and His angels

### **VIII. The greatest principle of life**

- A. For me to live is Christ
- B. To die is gain
- C. That was how John faced his darkest hour
  - 1. Devoted
  - 2. Fighting doubt
  - 3. Believing in the Son of GodReceiving eternal life

### **IX. Questions we must ask when our crisis brings us to the end**

- A. What will be the message of your life?
- B. What difference was made in this world because you lived?
- C. What will you leave behind that has lasting value?
- D. Will there be anyone whose life you had a part in changing their eternal destiny by sharing the saving knowledge of believing in Jesus?
- E. Do you realize your life and legacy will keep living long after you are gone?

**This Was The Story Of John The Baptist  
And Your Story  
Going From The Darkest Hour  
To The Glorious Light**