

Remnant Life Church
October 13, 2019
Recipe for Dealing With Impossible
Exodus 14:5-15

A departure from the chronology of the books

- We have not even started into Genesis yet
- Need to take this time to talk about some very important principles and lessons from the story of the crossing of the Red Sea
- Not going to go into all the context of the story now – save that for when we are in the book of Exodus

READ – Exodus 14:5-15

This context:

- The Israelites have been traveling in the desert for a little over 2 weeks before reaching the shores of the Red Sea
- By this time Pharaoh has realized the full consequence of losing the Hebrew people and has begun to pursue them
- He is coming with 600 chariots in addition to his army
- The people have been camped along the shore for 8 days and see the army coming

A question – why would the Israelites have waited at the Red Sea for so long without moving on?

- Are there times when what God tells you to do doesn't make any sense?
- Did waiting for over a week in one place make sense?
- Moses knew this Pharaoh
- He knew how the Egyptian mind worked
- Pharaoh would never allow himself to lose face after making a decision he would later regret

The people are against the sea, there are mountains on either side, and the entire might of the Egyptian military is riding down on them.

- Something like the full US military bearing down on the Mechanicsburg Police Department

From what we read this morning, there are 3 great components that can make up your recipe for dealing with the impossible in your life.

1. **Do not be afraid (14:13a)**
 - a. While this may sound overly basic it is the first step to dealing with an impossible situation
 - b. We get a very understated sentence as the condition of the Israelites is reported
 - c. *As Pharaoh approached, the Israelites looked up, and there were the Egyptians, marching after them. They were terrified and cried out to the LORD. (14:10)*

- d. Of course they were terrified!
 - i. All these people had known was the might and brutality of the Egyptians
 - ii. And those were only the labor overseers – this was the Egyptian army – one of the most powerful, professional, and ruthless military machines of that day
 - iii. Could the people have even heard Moses’ words of, “Do not be afraid?”
- e. Why was that the first thing that God wanted the people to know through Moses?
 - i. It is because of the effect fear has on us
 - ii. Fear wreaks havoc with our minds
 - 1. It changes the very function of our bodies
 - a. Hyperventilate, blood pressure elevates, heart rate increases
 - b. Pupils dilate, adrenal glands start pumping adrenaline into our bodies, our muscles tighten
 - iii. It also alters the way we see and deal with the things going on around us
 - 1. For the Israelites, they automatically looked to find fault and falsely condemn others
 - 2. This is because fear causes you to lose your sense of what is true
 - 3. *They said to Moses, “Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us to the desert to die? What have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt? Didn’t we say to you in Egypt, ‘Leave us alone; let us serve the Egyptians’? It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert!” (14:11-12)*
 - a. They accuse Moses of being the reason they are in the situation
 - b. *“Didn’t we say to you in Egypt, ‘Leave us alone, let us serve the Egyptians?’”*
 - i. REALLY?!?
 - ii. Are we to gather from that statement that Moses and Aaron forced the entire nation to pack up and move?
 - iii. Talk 2.5 million people into doing something they did not want to do?
 - iv. Not only did they find fault and falsely condemn, but they also became blind to a healthy perspective of the situation
 - 1. When we are afraid we forget all that God has done for us
 - 2. The Israelites completely forgot what God had done – 10 plagues – that happened just 15 or 16 days ago
 - v. Fear blinds our eyes and blanks our mind to what God does, and to what He is seeking to do.
 - vi. Finally, fear paralyzes us
 - 1. We become frozen in the time or circumstances
 - 2. It is why we often spend so much time in the middle of the storm
 - 3. We can’t act because of fear
 - 4. God knew that in fear, the Israelites would not have been to put a responsive action to what He was about to miraculously do

2. Stand firm (14:13b)

- a. Another translation uses the words “stand still.”
- b. Both are accurate in what Moses was saying to the people
- c. One problem for most people in dealing with difficult situations is that we act too quickly
 - i. We’re looking for a quick solution
 - ii. We’re looking for an escape
 - iii. It almost always leads to making a foolish decision that not only doesn’t solve the problem but makes it worse
 1. We will do things we know are not right
 2. We will take advice from people who should not be speaking into our lives
 3. We waste our energy on futile efforts to find a way out
 - iv. In reality what we should be doing is standing still, standing firm, and waiting
- d. Acting too quickly is also a byproduct of anticipating the worse from a situation
 - i. When you dwell on that thinking you have just added the crush of depression to your situation making it even harder to think clearly
 - ii. **Prov 3:5-6** - *Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.*
 - iii. To stand still and wait allows you to gain a healthy perspective on what the true nature of the problem is
- e. Waiting on what?
 - i. To gain not only a healthy perspective but a godly one
 - ii. Waiting on God to give you direction
 - iii. Waiting in His time for what you are to do
 - iv. NOTICE – the Israelites did not sit and wait until the Egyptians were attacking them – waiting does not mean a total absence of activity that usually means you are now trying to hide from your problem

READ: 2 Sam 5:17-20a

- When you don’t seek the Lord you are relying solely on yourself and you miss what God wants you to know
 - Joshua at Ai in **Josh 7**
- But seeking the Lord also deals with fear
 - **Ps 34:4** - *I sought the LORD, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears.*
 - **Ps 77:2** - *When I was in distress, I sought the Lord*
 - **Ps 27:1** - *The LORD is my light and my salvation— whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life— of whom shall I be afraid?*
- f. How do you know if you have moved from waiting to hiding?
 - i. Your situation is not only present but getting much worse
 - ii. You refuse to seek godly, wise counsel
 - iii. You aren’t willing to change the action of what you had been doing that got you into the problem in the first place

- iv. You have begun to rationalize and justify the situation and have started telling others and yourself that it really isn't that bad
- v. You are beginning to distance yourself from those people who love you enough to call you on what is going on
- g. When Moses told the people to stand still, he wasn't saying we aren't going to do anything – he was telling them not to do something foolish in an effort to fix the problem

3. Move on (14:15)

- a. A renowned Methodist Bishop Gerald Kennedy said in his autobiography...
 - i. *We can assume only two positions in the presence of God. One is on our knees saying 'God be merciful to me a sinner!'; the other is on our feet saying 'Here am I! Send me.'*
 - ii. This is the physical picture of a Christian in the time of crisis, in the face of the impossible
- b. May sound strange but we must often stand still first before we can move on
 - i. If we try and move on while in the time of frantic activity, we most often move in the wrong direction
 - ii. But we also can't stay on our knees forever
 - 1. **I Sam 23:1-5a**
 - 2. When God said He was going to destroy the Israelites after the golden calf, Moses intervened on Mt. Sinai, but then went down to the people and took care of business (**Ex 32:9-28**)
- c. Consider again the circumstances of the Israelites
 - i. They are in deep despair
 - 1. Better to have stayed in slavery!
 - 2. That looks better than what they are now facing
 - 3. But the new command of "Move on" doesn't make any sense either
 - 4. Move on to where!?
- d. The story of the Israelites crossing the Red Sea is more than a historical record
 - i. It was a marker for a point in history that was a new beginning
 - ii. A mighty act of God, the anchor of faith, and the action of Moses and the Hebrews birthed a new people, a new nation
- e. The nation of Israel was born out of an impossible situation that required them to quell their fears, stand firm, and be ready to move on
- f. Great things in your life will be born when you seek God and move at His command in the times of impossible!

What is the recipe for dealing with impossible?

- Don't be afraid
- Stand still and know God's presence
- Be ready to move on, move forward

With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible. " **Matthew 19:26**