

If I Perish, I Perish

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[0 : 00] Music. So the last few weeks now we have been looking at the idea of the dialogues back and forth of Mordecai representing the Holy Spirit and Esther who represents the human soul or the human spirit and the dialogue back and forth of the two of them.

In that then we have also pictured in that the grieving and the quenching of the Spirit of God. After we got home last Wednesday night and I guess after we went to bed I was laying there thinking about that and thought to myself you know we really need to go back and look at those two things for just a moment because we really just kind of left that in the air and didn't address those two ideas of grieving and quenching the Spirit of God.

We haven't addressed that I don't think adequately about our life and how we have to avoid that. So remember in Esther chapter 4 verses 1 and 2 it reminds us when Mordecai perceived all that was done now this of course the power that Haman had in the palace and the decree to do away with the Jews that he had written when he perceived all of that Mordecai rent his clothes put on sackcloth with ashes and went out into the midst of the city and cried with a loud and bitter cry and came even before the king's gate for none might enter into the king's gate clothed with sackcloth. And of course it later on in the next verse or later on it said it said that all through the kingdom when the word came out that that same thing was happening that people were mourning they were crying and put on sackcloth and ashes and so forth.

So that's a picture here if you will of the Spirit of God whom Mordecai represents being grieved. Being grieved over what's taking place in this case in the palace and also I think to some degree as we go along in the life of Esther.

[2 : 22] Now in Ephesians chapter 4 verse 30 very simple statement. King James renders it and do not grieve the Spirit of God. The literal rendering is stop grieving the Holy Spirit of God whereby you are sealed unto the day of redemption.

As it speaks in the original stop grieving gives us the idea then that in the life of some of the believers at Ephesus they were doing things in their lives that caused grief to the heart of the Spirit of God.

The word grieve in that case in the original signifies pain, pain of body or of mind. So it's to cause pain or grief, to distress or to grieve.

To make sorrowful, to affect with sadness, to cause grief, to throw into sorrow. So you see the idea here of the picture of what it does in the heart and mind of the Spirit of God.

But it's a picture for us here that, you know, I don't know really how the best way to say it. That the Spirit of God does feel these things no doubt from what the Apostle Paul is saying.

[3 : 34] Our activity as God's people, as believers, has an effect upon the heart and mind of God. All right? So that's why Paul says stop doing that.

Stop grieving the Spirit of God. Now, it's not a general exhortation, if you will. It refers back in reality to what takes place before. Go over in your Bible to Ephesians chapter 4.

Because I didn't put this up there on the slide. But in Ephesians chapter 4, remember what Paul has been saying here that leads up to that statement. He says in verse 17 and 18 of Ephesians 4, And he describes that in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through ignorance that is in them because of the blindness of their heart.

Verse 19, Verse 22 again, Wherefore, and here's where we pick up, verse 25, Putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.

Be angry and sin not, let not the sun go down upon your wrath. Neither give place to the devil, let him that stole steal no more, but rather let him labor working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give him to him that needeth.

[5 : 29] Verse 29, and verse 29 is really the one that verse 30 refers to. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers, and then stop grieving the Spirit of God, whereby you are sealed into the day of redemption.

So I think we pick up from the idea here. So in those verses preceding, verse 25 through 29, really we can safely say that the conduct that are listed there, any conduct, that contrary to the nature and character of God, will bring grief to the heart of the Spirit of God, not necessarily just the idea of corrupt communication.

And so we've got to be careful how we conduct ourselves in light of the fact that the Spirit of God, who is the one that has placed that seal, not only of keeping, but that seal of possession upon us, that we are gods, dwells within us.

And any conduct that's contrary to the nature and character of God, can bring grief to the Spirit of God. Now, quenching the Spirit of God.

We get the picture there in verses 4 through 12, 10 through 12, of Esther. Again, Esther spake unto Haddish, and gave him commandment unto Mordecai, all the king's servants, and all the king's provinces do know, that whosoever, whether man or woman, shall come unto the king, into the inner court, who is not called, there is one law of his to put him to death, except such to whom the king shall hold out the golden scepter, that he may live.

[7 : 23] But I have not been called to come in unto the king, these 30 days. And they told those, Mordecai, Esther's words. So, that picture there again, remember we said the idea here is, probably, Esther thinking to herself, there's a better way to do this.

You know, I need to stay alive. If that's really the case, I need to stay alive, and try to work things out here in the palace, so things don't get out of hand. So it's the idea of quenching the Spirit of God.

1 Thessalonians chapter 5, verse 19, makes a very simple statement. Quench not the Spirit of God, or quench not the Spirit. And that word quench is to extinguish, quench metaphorically, to quench, to suppress, or to stifle.

It comes from the idea of putting out a fire. And that's the idea. Putting out the fire, if you will, of the Spirit of God, within the heart and the life. So the sense is, that we're not to extinguish, the influences of the Holy Spirit, in our lives.

How did Esther do that? What did Esther do, to quench the Spirit of God here? What did she do? Survival. Self-survival.

[8 : 34] What is it? She's now in God's ability to take care of her. She hadn't gotten there yet, had she? Yeah. She's so fearful. Yeah. She rationalized things. Well, listen. You know, that may be true.

And what's going on? We would have to do my synagogue if I did. Yeah. Yeah. Not lying, not thinking more because, not telling the truth here. But hey, if that's the case, better for me to stay alive and stay in the palace. All right?

So, rationalizing things. You know, when we feel the Spirit of God urging us to do something, to say something, whatever it may be, we've got to be sure that we're not going to put water on the fire here.

I was thinking about this years ago. When I was in high school, I was on Civil Air Patrol here in Bartlesville. We went out, well, actually it was out toward New Harmony and there used to be an old airstrip out there.

And we had what's called a SARCAP. It's a search and rescue simulation type thing. Basically an overnight camp out and doing whatever. Rainy, cold, night.

[9 : 39] we had built a campfire outside there. And so, some of the rest of us are either going to go in the tent. Some of us even went back into the car at night and to keep warm.

And I told one of the other guys, I said, you know, go out there and stoke the fire. Okay? A little bit later, go out there and the fire's out. No fire.

I said, what'd you do? He said, I thought you said soak the fire. Hey, so, that's what we do sometimes. Yeah, yeah.

Instead of soaking the fire, we need to stoke the fire. Amen? Yeah, when the Spirit of God inclines us to do something. Whether we think we can do it or not.

Whether it's, you know, we, you know, and again, that's not the case. You know, we need to just stop thinking. Amen? Amen? Yeah. Yeah. Just, yeah.

[10:38] Yeah, say, quenching the Spirit. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah, say, all right, God, you know, you know best. You really do. And so, you know, we just follow and obey the Spirit of God and not be quenching the Spirit of God.

I just thought that important for us to kind of address that before we went any further in the study. But this is... Yeah, yeah, yeah. Don't soak, stoke.

Hey, that's, make that the same. Don't soak, stoke. I think you'll have to explain that. All right. The Holy Spirit obeyed. Now, remember where Esther's come to.

Mordecai, Mordecai brought her to a place of real confrontation, remember. You know, not only did he give her a copy of the resolution or the decree that all the Jews be killed, but he also said to her, you've got to go into the king and do something.

All right. There's the confrontation. Very uncomfortable for her. But she's going to have to address the matter. She's going to have to do what, she's going to have to decide what she's going to do.

[11:54] Conviction of convenience or conviction of, no, conscience of convenience or conscience of conviction. Which is she going to address here? How is she going to respond?

By which of those two? Now, it's all been fully laid out before Esther. The issues have been clearly defined for her here and now it's time to respond.

So here, the great part, she responds to Mordecai. She responds with determination and with great courage and paints for us a picture of what true discipleship is.

Remember, didn't we see the passage last week and it was in Matthew's Gospel? If any man would come after me, let him what? What's the first thing he's got to do?

Deny himself. Die to self, if you will. Take up his cross and follow me. All right. That's a picture of true discipleship. Here's her response after chapter 4 verses 15 through 16.

[12:57] Esther bade them return Mordecai this answer. Go, gather all the Jews that are present in Sushan and fast ye for me. Neither eat nor drink three days, night or day.

I also and my maidens will fast likewise and so will I go in unto the king which is not according to the law. Now look, and if I perish, I perish.

Now let that soak in a minute here. Realize what she's going to do. The greatest percentage of time the king, you know, she'll die.

and she's already realized that's the probability here. But tell me, somebody tell me, what is she doing here?

What is she doing? Yeah. just like, I think she's preparing and still maybe getting rid of the rest of the flesh that's harboring in these three days of preparation just to strengthen herself in the Lord and continue to deny that.

[14:13] I think she's come to the point of denying herself but she wants people to pray for her for three days so she can maintain that and have the courage to follow through with that.

Yeah. Yeah. But to do, before, and I was trying to think earlier, well, on the way over here, which is, which is, which has to come first, the chicken or the egg?

You know? it's a matter of trusting God and dying to self. Which has to come first? You know, does a person have to die to themselves or realize they've already been crucified with Christ?

That's what I'm saying by dying to self. And then fully trust God? Or fully trust God? And I think I've just answered my own question.

fully trusting God, not just in the consequences here, but trusting that God has nailed our sins to his cross.

[15:21] Yeah. That's the key. Write that down. Yeah, because I won't remember. Write it down, babe. Oh, it is? Yeah, I'll just have to listen to it. Yeah. All right. Yeah. To realize we know that, and that's what Paul says in Romans chapter six, reckon yourself, he talks about, we're crucified with Christ, died with him, rose, buried with him, rose with him.

So then he says, reckon, place to your account the reality that you're dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God.

All right? So it's a matter of trusting that that's the reality of it. And then being able to be obedient after that takes place.

If I perish, go pray for me fast three days, night and day, and I'll go on into the king against what the law of the kingdom says.

You know, if I perish, I perish, it's simply a matter of her trusting. Now, the course was set, she was determined, and sure, only the consequences remained unsure here.

[16:46] She didn't know what was going to happen. If there's a thing that runs through this that I want us to get is this. The first thing she's going to do is obey God.

She's going to do what Mordecai, the Holy Spirit, is telling her to do. And what is she doing with the consequences? She's simply leaving the consequences to God.

Catch that. It's all a matter of obeying God, trusting Him, obeying Him, and trusting Him with the consequences consequences, of what happens with it all.

Well, it reminds me of when Paul said, I can either live or die. If I die, it's more to my advantage, that if I live, I can go ahead and live.

Yeah, yeah, yeah. And who was it? Was he standing before a gripper? No, he's, anyway, he was telling somebody later on in the book of Acts, about, about the trials he had gone through, and then he has the audacity to make the statement, but none of these things move me.

[18:06] I mean, thrown in jail, stoned, beaten, all of that, left for dead, but none of these things move me. Because I don't count my life dear unto myself.

Wow. Now, you're talking about dying to self. That's it. I have not counted myself dear unto myself. My life dear unto myself.

All right, and that's what she's doing here. Only the consequences remain unknown to her. Now, take notice, if you will. Don't get any picture here of Esther selling any of her royal gowns.

Amen? Yeah. She didn't dismiss any of her servants. She didn't relinquish the crown that she had been wearing. Didn't do any of that.

Didn't make room for the next queen. Because she didn't need to. Get that. She didn't have to do that. She was trusting God with the consequences that was going to take place here.

[19:21] The issue she had faced was final. And that one particular issue about going in before the king, surrounded, embraced all the other lesser issues that she faced.

She's now alive unto God, alone. Alive unto God alone, and not to herself. She's dead to herself, to all her self-interest, dead to everything else.

She's alive unto God alone. Alright? Now, three days and three nights. Esther was already buried. Alright? In essence.

Already buried. She died to herself. Resolved to die. She had forsaken all. She's as good as dead. She knew well that the only thing that's going to keep her from dying was that scepter.

Was that scepter being raised and held out before her. And only that could raise her from the dead on that third morning as she entered under and invited to the presence of the king.

[20:24] Now, there's a wealth of significance, you realize, in the third morning. Recognize it. Three days, three nights, the third morning. It was on the third morning that Joshua and Israel were brought through on dry ground unto the land of promise.

God spared them, miraculously brought them across. Three days and three nights, Jonah was in the belly of the whale, dead, stinky, covered with seaweed, only to be raised again alive from the dead on the third morning.

I just know how appropriate the shaking starts when we start talking about resurrection on the third morning. It was on the third morning that Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw a place far off.

The place where a knife was to be plunged into the heart of Isaac, his only son as far as the covenant is concerned. It was in him that was comprehended for Abraham all the promises of God and life itself.

Now, then, as well, on the third day, in the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulcher.

[21:38] And behold, there was a great earthquake, for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone from the door and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, his raiment was white as snow.

And for fear of him, the keepers did shake and became as dead men. And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye, for I know that you seek Jesus which was crucified.

He is not here, for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord laid. Now, of course, that's the resurrection that made all the others possible.

Amen? And that's the glorious resurrection that makes it possible for you and I to die to ourselves because we were crucified with him, but we rose with him as well.

Amen? To resurrection life. I'm sold on the fact that if we get just a taste, no, I shouldn't put that right, if we were able to just simply garner some larger percentage of what it really is to reckon ourselves dead indeed unto God or dead undead and sin and alive unto God that our lives would be transformed from what they are now.

[23 : 13] Again, realize with me, laying in the midst of all of this is the idea of giving up self-effort in trying to please God and satisfy his will and having died to ourselves, just letting God accomplish that through us.

Yeah, yeah. Now, willingness to die is the price one must pay if we want to be raised from the dead to live and work and walk in the power of that third morning, sharing the resurrection life of the Lord Jesus Christ on earth.

So in this we are identified with him in the unfolding of his redemptive purposes that will be finding their final consummation in his glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.

Now, Colossians 3, 1-4, if you then be risen with Christ, and literally the rendering is since you have been risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God, set your affections on things above, not on things of the earth, for you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

Now, I like this next phrase, when Christ who is our life shall appear, then ye also shall appear with him in glory.

[24 : 41] Did you catch that? When Christ who is our life, and it's not just the idea that he's given us life, eternal life, but he's our life now. Alright?

It's the idea of the crucified life, crucified with him, risen with him. He is our life, but when he comes, when he appears, we'll appear with him in that glorified state.

So, Esther stepped out on that third morning as she crossed the threshold of the royal court into the presence of the king uninvited.

Think about that. Try to picture that in your mind. Here she comes. She's got her royal robes on, and walks through those doors.

I just imagine her heart's pounding, legs probably weak, not knowing what's going to happen here, but walks in.

[25 : 40] But you know what I really think she does? is she looking at the scepter to see what he's going to do with it?

What do you think she's doing? Yeah, I do too. I think she's looking Ahasuerus straight in the eyes.

Now, she didn't go like this, but I think that's what she's doing. I think she's looking right at him, because she's trusting God. It doesn't make any difference if that scepter comes up or not.

She's trusting God with the consequences. She had everything to gain. Although compelled by someone's inner sense, Esther threw her life away, as some people thought probably.

It was as if, though, as she stood there, walked in, as if in her voice, a little voice kept saying, if I perish, perish, I perish. If I perish, I perish.

[26 : 46] And God take the consequences, and He did. Amen? Now, what happens from this point? What happens from this point?

Esther 5, verses 1 and 2, it came to pass on the third day, Esther put on her royal apparel, stood in the inner court of the king's house, over against the king's house, and the king sat up upon his royal throne in the royal house, over against the gate of the house.

And it was, you ever wonder where Mordecai was in all of this? Is he still in sackcloth and ashes at the king's gate? Don't know. I'd almost be surprised if he's not.

But look, the king sat upon his throne in the royal house, over against the king's house, it was also, well, over against the gate of the king's house.

And it was so, he may have had a bird's eye view here. What's going on? It was so when the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court that she obtained favor in his sight.

[28 : 00] The king held out to Esther the golden scepter that was in his hand, so Esther drew near and touched the top of the scepter. Oh, I love that. Yeah.

She's looking him right in the eyes and he rolls up that royal scepter and she just walks up calmly, collectively, touches the tip of that royal scepter.

He's welcomed her and she's accepted the welcome. Amen. Get the picture here. The spirit of God impressing upon the heart of the human spirit to obey.

She's died to herself and she obeys. And I gotta think, you think about, you think about, back when she became queen, went through all that preparation stuff and all these women went before the king, but when he saw Esther, didn't have all the regular royal trinkets and everything else, she just wore what was required of her.

to go in the king's presence and he saw within her things she never saw in anybody, he never saw in anybody else. And he loved her.

[29 : 28] Gotta believe when she stepped into his presence here, in the royal garments, with a crown on, looking him straight in the eye, gotta be this way, Mike.

His heart just went boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom. It was her. Yes? I like the idea that she touched the top of the scepter.

I'm assuming no one's ever done that before. Never thought about that. Because that's the king's property, but if she's representing, at this point, is that the Holy Spirit reaching out to man and touching him?

Take it a little further. Anybody want to take that a little further? Did you hear what she said about her touching the tip of the scepter? You got the picture of the human spirit being welcomed by the human soul.

And it's almost as if when she reaches out to touch that, they too become one. They too become one.

[30 : 39] whoa! Those separate entities, two become one because they're meshed together in what the spirit of God has inclined the spirit to do.

Amen? Amen? Sounds good anyway. How dare she touch that? Yeah, yeah, yeah, that's a good thought. I had not thought about that.

Lee, in your study, did you read anything about that? Has anybody ever touched the top of the scepter before? I don't remember. Okay. I didn't either. That phrase is in there first.

Yeah, yeah, I'll have to, I'll have to, Lee, check that out and I will too. Dan? Yeah. Before 11, it just says he just held out his scepter and if he did that, then you were allowed to come forward.

Yeah, yeah, yeah. She actually was, God gave her the courage to go up and actually reach out and touch it. I think, is that God reaching out to man? That's pure, pure faith in God and, and, and, whoa, what a picture, a picture of, of, of, of reckoning that whatever God determined and did was complete and good.

[32 : 01] Yeah. God raised her from the dead, dead to herself, alive unto God. Now, all the responsibility now rested fairly and squarely upon the shoulders of Mordecai rests upon the Spirit of God.

Who can know the heart of a man except the Spirit of the man? Didn't know what Paul says in his letter to the church at Corinth? Yeah. Likewise, it's the Spirit of God that knows the heart of God so he can instruct the people of God into the will of God.

All right? All the responsibility rests now fairly and squarely upon Mordecai's shoulders. Esther now knew the emancipation of obedience and there were no issues for her to face, only instructions to obey.

Now, here's our emancipation. Romans 6 verses 11 through 13, Likewise, reckon you also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Let not sin then therefore reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in the lusts thereof.

Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield yourselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

[33 : 29] Now, verses 16 through 18, Know ye not that to whom you yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants you are to whom you obey, whether of sin unto death or of obedience unto righteousness.

Isn't that a simplistic statement? But it's true. Whoever we yield to, that's our master. We're servants. So if it's the sin nature, if it's the flesh, we're servants to the flesh.

But if it's unto God, if we yield ourselves unto God, obedient to him, he's our master, if you will.

We're his servants. But God be thanked, now get the picture here, God be thanked that you were, time passed, the servants of sin, but you have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered to you.

Being then made free from sin, you became the servants of righteousness. Romans 6 verses 20 and 22. When you were servants of sin, you were free from righteousness. What fruit had you then in those things whereof you're now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin and become servants to God, you have your fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life.

[34 : 54] That's our emancipation. Amen? Amen? Just like Esther was emancipated from herself. We are too. Amen? Alright.

Let's do, I should not say this, let's do the Nike thing. Remember their old phrase from years ago? Just do it. Amen? Just do it. Let God be God in us as completely as we possibly can. Amen? Amen? Amen? Amen? Amen? Amen? Thank you.