

Honest Conversations with Satan Part 2 of 2

Presented by Rev. Kristen Lowe on 11-19-2017

at Crossroads United Methodist Church, Waunakee, WI.

HONEST CONVERSATIONS *with Satan*

Jesus was tempted in the wilderness by Satan and modeled for us how to combat that temptation. It's not as black and white to us as it was described in the book of Matthew. For us, it's more subtle. We are subjected daily by quiet directives. But scripture helps us understand what we need to do to get through these situations.

James 11:7,8a

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.

Ephesians 6:11-16

Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

Be filled with God's Spirit today as you hear the Holy Scripture.

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What should Pastors do with personal pain?

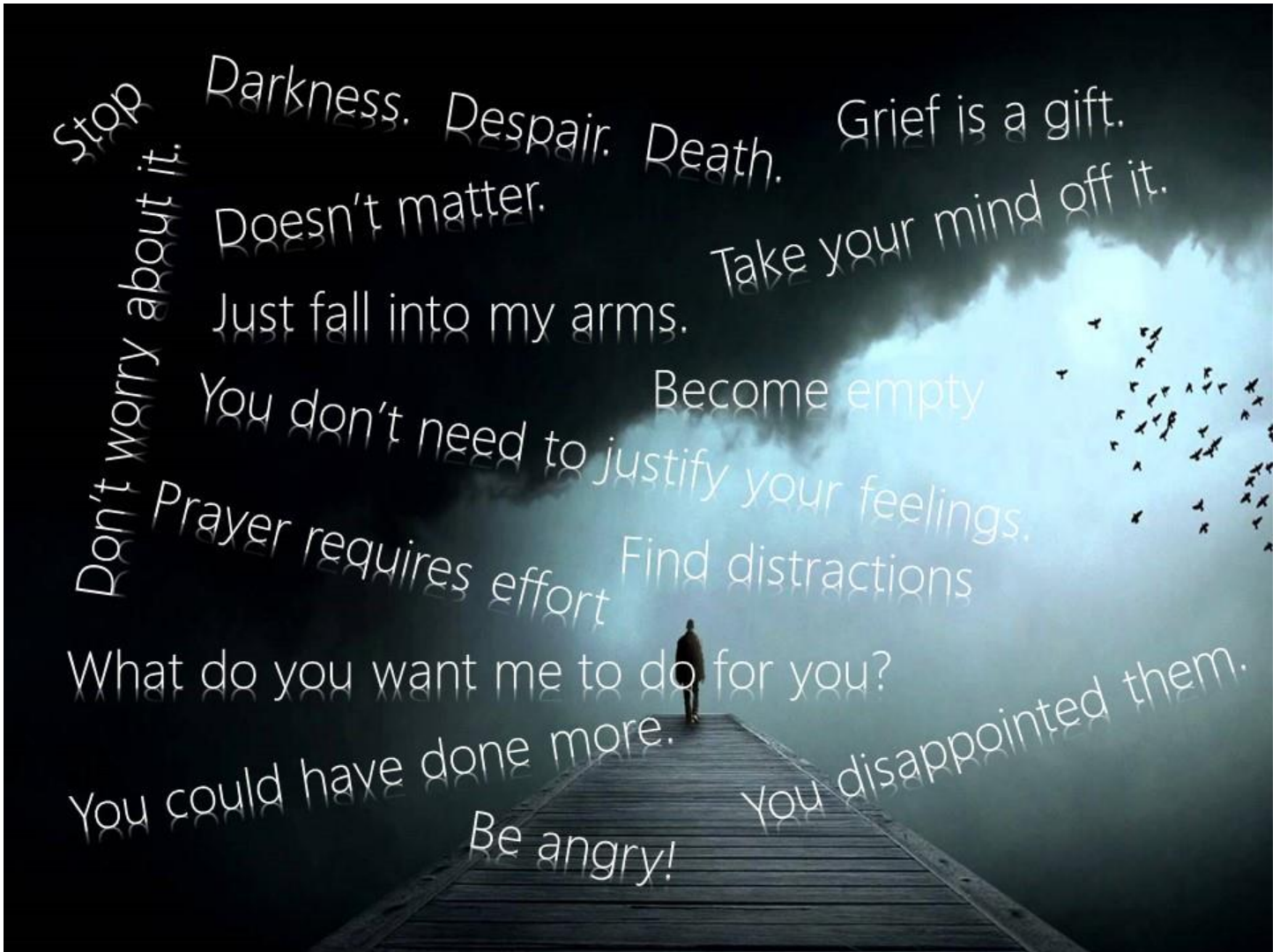


Last week summary

Series of unfortunate events (see message notes from 11-12-2017)

We all deal with the challenges of being pulled down into the head noise

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What were the voices?

- You should have been a better daughter/ friend/ mother/ pastor.
- Your anointing for pastoral ministry has been lifted. It's time to do something else.
- Take time for healing so that you can regain the strength to help others heal.
- When you thought you were exhausted you were really just selfish.
- You didn't do all you could for your parents, child, friends, congregation.
- You've let people down.
- You have sacred worth and are never alone.
- You know how eating makes you feel better? Don't worry about portions or if it's healthy. Sometimes you just need a break. You deserve to feel good.
- Shut off the TV and minimize the distractions. Focus on God's love to lift the burden of pain. In all our weakness, he becomes strong.

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- If you want to feel better, there is nothing wrong with binge watch something edgy on Netflix and stuffing yourself with Cheetos. Praying and working through this stuff is boring and probably overrated. Plus, if you put your heart into it.. you're going to hurt again, and you're just starting to get over everything.
- Yeah, people around you have pain too. But they can take care of themselves. Your problems are the important ones right now.
- There's nothing wrong with just going through the motions if that's all you can do.
- You don't have the energy to work through this with prayer and meditation. Take the easy way... just let time sweep it away and keep busy with projects.
- What do you want me to do for you?



My problem at times is that it's hard to distinguish the voices. Do you find that too? Sometimes they feel like they blur together a little. I think sometimes Satan takes the name "Justification" or "Entitlement."

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My sermon is called an honest conversation with Satan. But, what is honest about this conversation? What is honest about tricky language?

To be honest means free of deceit. Sincere.

1 John 4:1-3 – Testing the Spirits

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already. Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.



What effect does what you are hearing have on your soul and your spirit? Words from the Lord will quicken your faith and increase your love, peace and joy. They will stimulate a sense of humility within you as you become more aware of who God is and who you are. On the other hand, any words you receive that elicit fear or doubt, that bring you into confusion or anxiety must be immediately rebuked and rejected as lies of the enemy.

The most difficult part of hearing God is the fact that it takes time to learn to discern God's voice -- and it takes a humble heart.

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So what does this mean? It means that daily... even moment by moment, we have to keep filling ourselves with the Holy Spirit. If we continually seek God, Satan's voice will fade.

Jeremiah 29:12-13 says, "Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. **And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.**"

This means we have to take action. Yes, God loves us and desires to comfort us. But, the free will that we were created with means that God does not force himself on us.



Story of Blind Bartemaeus

⁴⁶ They came to Jericho. As he and his disciples and a large crowd were leaving Jericho, Bartimaeus son of Timaeus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the roadside.

⁴⁷ When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

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⁴⁸ Many sternly ordered him to be quiet, but he cried out even more loudly, “Son of David, have mercy on me!”

⁴⁹ Jesus stood still and said, “Call him here.” And they called the blind man, saying to him, “Take heart; get up, he is calling you.” ⁵⁰ So throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus.

⁵¹ Then Jesus said to him, “What do you want me to do for you?”

- He asked...
 - Because healing Bartemaues meant that he would have to change everything. Was he ready?

During my time apart from you, because of all the setbacks I encountered, I had to make a decision. When Jesus asked me, what do you want me to do for you?

I needed to figure out if I wanted to stay sad/mad for a while or free myself for healing. That meant listening to the voices. All of them. And measuring them up to scripture.

I have to admit, for some of this time, I was in a pretty deep pity party. I was numb. I didn't seek God as earnestly as I needed to. And my mind began to believe some of what the deceiver was saying. It's like quicksand.

Thankfully Jesus is patient. And, is ever willing to reach out to us.

The rest of Bartemaues' story is that he asked Jesus to make him well. He made a decision that day. He was tired of living the way he was and wanted things to change.

We have to have an honest conversation with Satan. When Jesus was in the desert being tempted by Satan, he resisted the efforts with words of scripture.

If anything, my friends, the deceiver is afraid of you. You have the power of the Holy Spirit on your side. Honest!