

Surviving the Unexpected

The Unexpected Crisis

- 1) The question is not if a crisis will come but when.

The Bible talks often about the challenges of overcoming trials, troubles and tribulations:

- a) David in the Old Testament

- i) *Psalm 34:19 – “Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all.”*

- ii) *Psalm 46:1 – “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.”*

- b) Jesus to His Disciples

- i) *John 16:33 – “I have said these things to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”*

- ii) *John 14:27 – “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.”*

- c) The Church in the New Testament

James 1:12 – “Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.”

- 2) Unexpected troubles never show up at a convenient time.

- 3) They often come in waves.

Examples Unexpected Marriage and Family Crises

- 1) Infertility
- 2) Financial Collapse
- 3) Major Illness
- 4) Death in the family
- 5) Addictions
- 6) Unfaithfulness or Negligent Partner

And unexpected crisis can easily get out of control. Most people can deal with only one crisis at a time, but every crisis has the ability to spawn other emotional, financial, occupational, and family crises.

If there is underlying conflict that you have been avoiding in a marriage, it will most likely surface under the pressure of the new challenge.

People can quickly lose hope.

We must deal with unexpected troubles!

Romans 12:11, 12 – “Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.”

Four Types of People

1) Sloths: The Lazy

- a) Some of us are just way too slow when it comes to dealing with an unexpected crisis.
- b) Many people find themselves paralyzed when they get overwhelmed.

2) Tinkerbells: The Magicians

They are always looking for magical solutions.

3) Ostriches: The Avoiders

Many people are like that. Just because you refuse to see the danger doesn't mean you are not exposed and vulnerable.

4) Donkeys: The Stubborn

Because of their anger and resentment they often become outright resistant to taking any positive actions.

Scripture warns us of an evil heart of unbelief. We are told, “Do not harden your heart.”

Hebrew 3:12-15 NKJV – “Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; ¹³ but exhort one another daily, while it is called ‘Today,’ lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. ¹⁴ For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the

beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end, ¹⁵ while it is said: 'Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.'"

Dealing with Unexpected Troubles

1) Deal with the theology of Christians in a crisis.

- a) The Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms defines theology as a religious belief system about God or ultimate reality.
- b) Many people have a religious belief system that is not biblical.

Many people have the theology of Job. Job's religious belief system held that if I fear God and do the right things, my life will be protected against bad things.

And yet nearly every famous biblical character's life was marked by incredible suffering. (Joseph, Moses, David, Daniel, Apostle Paul, and of course Jesus.)

c) Don't let your faith be shattered because of bad theology.

1 Peter 4:12 – "Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you."

2) Clarify the situation.

- a) Manage your reactions.
- b) Decisions need to be made in a timely matter.
 - i) Some decisions are urgent.
 - ii) Some decisions are not so urgent.

So you need to clarify what is urgent and what can be processed over time.

3) Seek some help but don't listen to everybody.

- a) Take the situation to Jesus first. He is our greatest counsel.

Isaiah 11:2 – “And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.”

- b) Take the situation to some good skilled counselors.

Proverbs 11:14 NKJV – “Where there is no counsel, the people fall; But in the multitude of counselors there is safety.”

Proverbs 20:18 – “Plans succeed through good counsel; don’t go to war without wise advice.”

Be careful about seeking secular advice or listening to people who do not understand the Bible or the Kingdom of God.

- 4) Take the next right step: Walk in the Spirit.

- a) Don’t be crippled by anger, sadness, or confusion.
- b) Walk in the Spirit.

*Romans 8:5-9 “For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. **6** For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. **7** For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God’s law; indeed, it cannot. **8** Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. **9** You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you...”*

- 5) Encourage one another

- a) Accept the words of encouragement from your partner.

We need to learn how to receive from our marriage partner.

- b) Two are better than one and three is better than two!

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 NLT – “Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. ¹⁰ If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble. ¹¹ Likewise, two people lying close together can keep each other warm. But how can one be warm alone? ¹² A person standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back-to-back and conquer. Three are even better, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken.”

- 6) Trust God for what you cannot control.
- 7) Seek the gold.

*1 Peter 1:6,7 – “In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, **7** so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”*

a) The refining process of Gold

- i) Gold is a precious metal, but it can be mixed with impurities. Even though it is a precious metal, it needs to be refined.
- ii) And so it is subjected to the intense heat of fire in a crucible, where impurities rise to the surface of the melted gold and are skimmed off by the goldsmith.

It is repeated and sometimes a current of air by a bellows turns up heat.

- iii) When the goldsmith is able to see the reflection of his face clearly mirrored in the surface of the liquid, he takes it off the fire, for he knows that the contents are pure gold.

b) The golden results:

- i) People Grow.
- ii) The Relationship Deepens.
- iii) Victories get celebrated.
- iv) God is glorified.