

20130224_BibleFaithFellowship_bj sermon

What's Going On With You?

Call to Worship

Galations 3:22-29, "But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

Praise and Worship

Praise Reports

Tithes and Offerings

Scripture Affirmation

Intercessory Prayer

Message

Every time you wake up, you start to find out what is on your mind, right? And, eventually, you say to yourself, "I've got to get up, because I need or want to do something, whatever that something is.", right? How did you know what you needed or wanted to do? Well, your mind told you right? Really, don't we talk to ourselves all the time, all morning, all afternoon, all evening, as long as we are awake?

And when we are with our family, don't we discuss the plans, and share what we are going to do, and what we have done?

And when we run into our friends and acquaintances, what is so often, even most often said, after, "How're you doing?" Isn't it something like, "What's up, man?" Or, "What's been happening?" Or, "What's going on with you?"

You see, people know that what we have been doing, and what we are planning to do, reveal details – some superficial and some intimate – that enable us all to know each other better, and to share the personal histories, as the level of intimacy of the relationship permits, of each other. If you have any interest in the person in front of you, it is important to know what is going on with them.

The answer to this type of question explains to them, your family, friends and acquaintances, what you are doing with your life, with the time God has allotted to you. And every morning, all day, your mind is dealing with you about what you are doing with your life, planning what you are going to do, dealing with what you have done. Your mind keeps wandering through the good, the bad and the ugly in your life, right?

Sometimes your mind worries, and sometimes it reveals your guilt, and sometimes it reveals your insecurities and issues with your self esteem, and sometimes it reveals your indecision, as you can't decide what, or when, to decide on all the competing options for decisions that your mind gives you, and keeps giving you.

This state of mental affairs is not mental illness; it is the human mind doing what the human mind is supposed to do. Your mind is helping you decide which steps to take in your life and, thereby, to create the history, the story, of your entire life. This is universal with humans, even a "way back then" guy like Mr. Job.

*In **Job 14:1-6, 10**, Mr. Job explains it this way, "Man who is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble. He comes forth like a flower and fades away; he flees like a shadow and does not continue. And do You open Your eyes on such a one and bring me*

to judgment with Yourself? Who can bring a clean thing out of an out unclean? No one! Since his days are numbered, the number of his months is with You; You have appointed his limits, so that he cannot pass (10)But man dies and is laid away; indeed he breathes his last and where is he?"

*And in **Job 14:14**, Mr. Job asks the pivotal, the most important, question in life, "If a man dies, shall he live again?" Mr. Job has a glimpse of the answer, and he gives it to us here in **Job 14:15-17**, "You shall call, and I will answer You; You shall desire the work of Your hands. For now You number my steps, but do not watch over my sin. My transgression is sealed up in a bag, and You cover my iniquity."*

Mr. Job lived a long time ago, but he had an authentic relationship with God, called Yahweh, and in that relationship Mr. Job had hope, despite the well-known desperation of his personal history. His story, his history, is well-described in the Book of Job, and we see so clearly, with Mr. Job, the mental expressions and ideas that assaulted his mind, from what happened to him (nothing was his fault), and from the decisions he made to reject the supposedly-wise counsel of his wife and friends. Mr. Job's mind was pivotal in his decisions, time and again, not to lie and admit guilt where it didn't belong, and not to reject or curse Yahweh. Mr. Job's faith and hope stayed

constant in all these terrible circumstances. God, Yahweh, redeemed Mr. Job in the natural flesh and gave him the basis for hoping in that redemption in the Spirit and the supernatural flesh.

And then God sent his only begotten Son, Jesus of Nazareth, who is the Messiah, the Christ. Jesus was sent to a rebellious generation of Israelites, led by prideful, arrogant, selfish leaders (Pharisees, Sadducees and High Priests) trying to compromise themselves and their people with the conquering Roman Army. And Jesus was also sent to the Gentiles, the “Non-Jews”, for their salvation as well.

What happened? As you know from your Bible study, even the 12 Disciples of Jesus were not instantly, after their calling by Jesus, complete, matured and perfected for their work for God. And even after all the time and energy Jesus poured into them, they still were not completed, matured and perfected. See, example of Peter rejecting Jesus 3x the night of Jesus’ arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane. Indeed, as humans, in themselves, they were never completely completed, matured and perfected. But the histories of the lives of the 12 Disciples of Jesus (with the correction for the Disciple Drop-Out, Judas), showed that they all sure got more and more complete, mature and perfected in Christ.

*And so we are all called to be. Notice that Mr. Job recorded in **Job 14:15**, “You shall call, and I will answer You.” Everything important in your life begins with God’s call to you, with God’s call on your life and your response. Like with Mr. Job, your circumstances don’t matter; your genetics and the environment in which you were reared, and the environment in which you live don’t matter. What matters is God’s call to you and on your life, and your response to Him. God has maybe already come to you, or maybe not. But even after God has called on you, He keeps calling; He keeps checking in through that busy Holy Spirit of His. He keeps asking your mind, “What’s going on with you?”*

In the New Testament, we see such a short, but clear explanation of what happens when God comes calling at your house, for you.

*In **John 11** we find the history of Jesus’ raising up his friend, Lazarus, from death. Let’s read the passage, **John 11:41-44**, “Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, ‘Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me.’ Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, ‘Lazarus, come forth!’ And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with*

grave cloths, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them (the assembled people), 'Loose him, and let him go.'"

*Now, Lazarus had been dead for four days (**John 11:39**), yet when Jesus called, Lazarus got up, shuffled out of the tomb, still bound up tightly in the grave clothes.*

We can see some metaphors here.

*When Jesus calls us from darkness to light, from sin to life eternal, we are already dead, we are just the walking dead, because, unredeemed from sin, we are already living and dying in bondage to sin and its wages, which is death (**Romans 6:23**).*

*And then we see that the bondage of death clothes did not fall off instantly, even when Lazarus answered the call of Jesus. When you accept Christ, when you answer His call to you and on your life, He starts to change you from the inside out. But your past, and your choices of reaction to your past, still bind you and slow you down and determine how you understand yourself and those around you. Today, while the Holy Spirit does that initial work of conviction and guidance (**John 16:13,8**), there is still a transformation going on in you and in your life. Transformation, by definition, is a process, and it needs help and it takes time. So, Jesus said to the assembly about Lazarus and his grave clothes, "Loose him, and let him go." Jesus is showing that we need each other's help to get free of our past, to get free of our bondages to*

sin and death, even after we have accepted Jesus as our Savior. We need help along the path of history in our lives, to help us become more complete, more mature, and more perfected in Christ. We need help along the way to make Jesus not only our Savior, but also our Lord and Master, in our lives in the today and now. In closing his second letter to the Church of God in Corinth, Paul wrote, "Finally, brethren, farewell, become complete." (2 Corinthians 13:11) Not a bad message to the Church of God in Hardeeville!

The Apostle Paul describes this transformation in 2 Corinthians 5:17 with these words, "Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new." You, and I, we are each "becoming" new. But, we still have our past that binds us up in bondage to sin and death. We often still have family, friends, acquaintances and associates who are continuing negative influences on us, on our thought patterns, on our self-esteem. We still have our old habits, even our old addictions (pornography, drugs, alcohol, anger management, nursing offences), and we are often the destructor in destructive relationships, but sometimes we are the destructee in destructive relationships. Those things didn't just all disappear when we answered the call of Jesus, and like Lazarus, we came shuffling in our bondage, with grave clothes

flapping and trying to unwrap, to answer the heavenly call. So, like with Lazarus, God sees that we need help, people help. So, God calls people and sends them, along with the Holy Spirit, into our lives to love us, to teach us, to hold us accountable to His standards, to set examples for us, to help us make the decisions to liberate us from that old bondage to sin and death, to help us walk in the life and live up to the potential God created in us, and for which He created us.

What do you and I need to do? We need to hear the call of Jesus, and we need to answer that call, not just by confessing with our mouths but, like Lazarus, with our shuffling feet, with ACTION! And we need, in our blindness, slowly being un-blinded, we need to find those people, those family, friends, acquaintances and associates who will help us, and we need to incorporate them into our lives. And, as the Lord calls, and the Holy Spirit leads, we need to be one of those helping people in the lives of those around us, our family, friends, acquaintances and associates. You need to be in fellowship with believers, that you would have positive influences to help you in your life.

So, with the helping people, what else do you need? You need to build, to come, to be-come as a new creature in Christ, into intimate relationship with God through prayer and Bible reading and study, all on a regular, daily, disciplined basis.

And you need to make quality choices of life as you, a new creature, build a new history of your life, as you depart on a new azimuth, a new direction, to follow Christ instead of continuing to follow your fleshly desires and Satan's deceptions, and lies.

As you do these four things: people, prayer, the Word, and your choices, your intimacy and comfort with God will mightily increase, and you will get to know and understand God's heart of love and grace, and His nature of truth and judgment, and you will get to know your self as God knows you. And, your hearts, full of grace received, and now grace extended to all those sinners around you – and to yourself – will be overflowing with thanksgiving.

*Then, as you are increasingly liberated into God's purpose and calling to you and on your life, you will find that in your relations with others around you, like Paul, **2 Corinthians 12:19**, you do all things for their "edification", for their building up. And you will find that you are the one, you are one of the ones described by Paul in **2 Corinthians 5:15**, knowing that Christ "died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again." You will find yourself with Paul, **2 Corinthians 13:4**, "For though He was crucified in weakness, yet He lives by the power of God. For*

we also are weak in Him, but we shall live with Him, by the power of God”

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, teaches us that there is a time, a season, in life for all things and for all purposes under heaven. This morning, I ask you, “What’s going on with you?” Are you spending your time, your few days and months, on earth, using your mind to think (that you might evaluate in a powerful way your options in life), to play (that you may be balanced in your life), to be friendly and loving (that you may be of some use to other people), to read (that you may gain insight to the wisdom of God), to laugh (to hear music in your soul), to give (that you may be blessed as you bless others), to work (to support yourself, your family and others).

Psalms 104:19-24 is all about time and explains to us that God created time for us – He is timeless – time for us in which we live and die, “He appointed the moon for seasons (it also measures months); the sun knows its going down (it measures days and hours and minutes and seconds). You make darkness, and it is night, in which all the beasts of the forest creep about. The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their food from God. When the sun rises, they gather together and lie down in their dens. Man goes out to his work, and to his labor until the

evening. O Lord, how manifold are Your works? In wisdom you have made them all."

In your time, and times, I ask you if you believe in Jesus Christ, and if so are you connecting yourself to people who will help you, and whom you can help, on the path to completeness, maturity and perfection in Christ?

I ask you if you are choosing to commune, and communicate, with God in prayer, that you may know God and yourself better?

I ask you if you are investing your time in reading and studying the Word of God, that you might gain wisdom?

*I ask you if you have developed a godly sorrow, **2 Corinthians 7:10**, that produces repentance, leading you to make quality choices, as you shuffle first, then walk, then run, with Salvation, into the Lordship of Jesus Christ over you, in your life?*

In other words, I ask you, "What's going on with you?" Is it going to be Me, or Thee, Lord. We each, all day, every day, have that decision to make, as by our choices we create the daily history of our lives. We may forget most of it; God won't. Our choices determine whether we really decided Me, or Thee, Lord. So, "What's going on with you?"

God bless you and amen+