

THE PROBLEM AND POWER OF NOT KNOWING

1 CHRONICLES 19:10-13; ACTS 20:17-38;
HEBREWS 11:8-10 // PASTOR TODD DUGARD
JANUARY 12, 2020

PREPARATION QUESTIONS

Read Acts 20:23, 25, and 29. Sometime we know the difficulty ahead without knowing how we'll ever get past it. List three difficult things Paul knew would happen as he left the safety of Miletus (vs. 17) to go to Jerusalem.

(v.23) In every city Paul expected...

(v.25) None of the people Paul had proclaimed the Gospel to would....

(v.29) After his departure...

- What specific trouble do you know lies just ahead as you attempt to serve Christ? In that situation, what do you not know?

- *Notice that Paul was not afraid to talk about what he was uncertain of. Getting specific helped his friends feel what he was feeling and they helped him prepare to face what was ahead. What advantages did Paul gain by gathering other believers to help prepare to move forward in obedience?*

Read Hebrews 11:1 and rewrite the definition of faith by memory in the space below.

- How did Abraham's life demonstrate real faith in the midst of uncertainty (Hebrews 11:8-10)?

- What is an example of real faith from your life?

Read 1 Chronicles 19:10-13 and consider what your typical response has been when “the battle was set against you both in front and the rear” as the ESV terms it.

- Does your typical response indicate a desire that *a) everything would go your way and life would be easy for you* or that *b) your faith would grow and your intimacy and knowledge of God would be beyond anything you’ve ever experienced?*
- What kind of tension comes when the above opposing desires are in play at the same time? How does choosing to sin or choosing to obey affect the sense of tension?
- Which of these seven wrong responses is most likely for you in when going through a long period of not knowing - Do you get... (1) Angry with God; (2) Envious of others; (3) Anxious and fearful; (4) Gripped by grief over past losses; (5) Filled with regret over past decisions; (6) Consumed with self; (7) Take matters into your own hands (shut God out)?

Check the most appropriate answer for this next question and explain why you selected it.

- As I seek to obey God in my current difficult situation, “not knowing” what will happen to me, I must believe more that Jesus will...
 - Help me endure*
 - Give me purpose*
 - Grow my faith*
 - Give me hope*
 - Show me his love*

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- In Acts 20:36-38 we see how the group gathered around Paul acted to help him move forward. List five specific experiences they shared. (*For example, “being sorrowful” together.*)
- Which of these activities is your group of spiritual friends good at? Give an example to make it clear how it is supportive.
- How could you improve in the areas you identify as weak when it comes to supporting one another through uncertainty?