

God's Effective Tri-Cycle

Judges 3

Introduction:

- A. Why is it important to tell the stories of the Bible?
1. So others will k_____ the Lord and the mighty works He has done.
 2. Our c_____ of God is NOT to be derived from our own experiences or ideas, but by from God's word, the Bible.
- B. Objections
1. The Old Testament stories are a record of what men had t_____ God said and did, but they obviously were mistaken.
 - a. Many cannot accept that God ordered Saul to kill all the Amalekites because it included the killing of innocent children (1 Sam 15).
 - b. So we do discount all such accounts as errors? The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah spared no children, only L_____ and his daughters (Gen 19:15), the wiping out of mankind in the universal flood spared no children, only N_____ and his family (Gen 7:23).
 - c. Jesus treated the story of Sodom and Gomorrah as h_____, saying that it will be more tolerable for them on judgment day than the cities He did miracles in (Lk 10:12).
 2. Since all other a_____ literature explains things through mythical stories, the stories of the Old Testament are also myths.
 - a. If the stories are myths, then they cannot be used to form our concept of God. But Jesus used the story of the B_____ Bush to explain that God is the God of the living (Lk 20:36-39)
 - b. If the stories are myths, then no one can know God – but that contradicts the purpose for Israel telling the stories!
- C. In today's text of Judges 3, God reveals more about who He is.
1. As the people of Israel fell into a multicyle of sin, repentance, sin, repentance..., God responded with a tri-cycle of actions.
 2. Unlike the people of God under the Old Testament, we have the Holy Spirit p_____ inside us making God's try-cycle of actions effective.

The Lord tests us to experience our faithfulness (1-6)

- A. The Lord left some people groups in the Promised Land to t_____ the people of Israel (v. 4).

- a. Testing is not the same as t_____ because the Lord cannot tempt us (Jms 1:13).
 - b. Tempting is working to draw someone into sin but testing is giving opportunity for one to be f_____.
 - c. The Lord tested Israel to _____ if they would obey His commandments.
 - 1) This Hebrew word means to ex_____ or to know in a personal way.
 - 2) God cannot experience our faithfulness without testing it (see Gen 22:12 where God said to Abraham, “Now I know that you fear God because you have not withheld your only son from Me.”)
- B. All ad_____ that comes into our lives are tests of our faithfulness to God (e.g. health crises, financial crises, strained relations, choices between right and wrong)
1. Satan will use them to t_____ you to sin.
 2. God will use them to g_____ you spiritually (Jms 1:3,4)

The Lord disciplines us to keep us (7-8, 12-14)

- A. Israel failed the first test and went after other g_____ (v. 7)
1. The Lord disciplined them by raising up the King of Mesopotamia named Cushan-rishathaim (literally, a doubly w_____ Cushite)
 2. This discipline lasted for _____ years until Israel finally cried out to the Lord.
- B. Israel failed the second test by doing e_____ in His sight.
1. The Lord disciplined them by raising up the King of M_____, name Eglon)
 2. This discipline lasted for _____ years until Israel finally cried out to the Lord.
- C. All believers in Christ are c_____ of God (Jn 1:12)
1. When a believer sins, God will d_____ them (Heb 12:5-7).
 2. Because we belong to God, God is obligated to k_____ us from being condemned along with the rest of the world (1 Cor 11:31).
 - a. He usually starts with g_____ (Gal 5:17)
 - b. If one does not respond to the above, God will i_____ the discipline
 - 1) He c_____ David with guilt through Nathan the prophet’s story of a rich man stealing a poor man’s only lamb (2 Sam 12:1-7; Psalm 51)

- 2) He disciplined the Corinthian Christians with s_____ for not celebrating the Lord's Supper properly (1 Cor 11:29,30).

The Lord restores us to faithful living (9-11; 15-30)

- A. Once the people of Israel cried out to Him, the Lord responded by
1. Raising up a j_____ to lead them.
 - a. He raised up O_____
 - b. He raised up E_____
 2. Empowering the judge and the people to overcome in a way that they knew that it was God's doing.
 - a. The Spirit of God came upon Othniel and he judged Israel and defeated the king of Mesopotamia.
 - b. Under Ehud, the people defeated 10,000 experienced warriors without e_____.
 3. R_____ them to peaceful living.
- B. Once believers in Christ repent from sin, the Lord responds by
1. Restoring our f_____ with Him
 2. Restoring our j_____ that we lost in our failure. But when guilt feelings linger:
 - a. Accept God's word that He has already f_____ you.
 - b. T_____ God for disciplining you (Heb 12:11)
 - c. A_____ God to restore your joy (Ps 51:12)
 3. Restoring us to faithful living – learn from your failures and live in faithfulness.