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## Discovering Our Economic Compass In An Economic Mess (Part 2)

**Intro:** Have you been paying attention to the banking crisis? With an estimated \$32 billion in assets, IndyMac Bank of Pasadena, Calif., which federal regulators seized Friday, is poised to become the third-largest bank failure in American history: (I was watching this on TV this week – explain – FDIC only \$100K per account.) Panic / fear / unbelief

- Last week I shared 3 navigational points for our lives during these tough economic times. Today, you get the other 3.

Mark 4:35-41 – Summarize story. Jesus had been teaching multitudes of people all day by the shores of the Sea of Galilee. As evening approached, He told His disciples, “Let’s go over to the other side.” Jesus and His disciples got in their boat and headed across.

- Sea of Galilee facts: 13 miles long – 8 miles wide – approx. 700ft. below sea level – lowest fresh water lake on earth. – Situated in the Great Rift Valley surrounded by mountains, (from 1500 to 3000 ft). it is prone to sudden, violent storms.

### IV. Decide To Follow God’s Program Not Your Own

- Jesus told them to go across the lake to the other side. Maybe they saw the storm clouds coming? These were experienced fishermen. They went anyway. They simply did what Jesus said. What Jesus said was the priority.
- How do I follow God’s program for my life?
  - A. Make God’s word a priority in your life
    1. We will never discover God’s program for our lives without knowing what He has said in His word. His word is the Program! His word is the Manual for life.
    2. I believe one of the greatest reasons for a lack of blessing / lack of experiencing God’s provision is that we simply don’t know His word. God has given us His word so we know His path of blessing.
    3. If we don’t know the map, we’re going to get lost. God’s word is the map for life. People often look at the word of God only focusing on the spiritual things not the practical realities of their lives. It’s the map for it all!

*Ps. 119:54 “Your principals have been the music of my life throughout the years of my pilgrimage.” (NLT)*

*Ps.119:59 “I pondered the direction of my life, and I turned to follow Your statutes.” (NLT)*

*Ps.119:105 “Your word is a lamp for my feet and a light for my path.” (NLT)*

4. If we don't know the word of God we can't make decisions based upon it. In fact, if you are not making decisions based upon the word of God, I can guarantee you that you are on your program not God's.
5. Jeff Paterson is starting a 3 week class this week. “Enjoying the Bible for all it's Worth”. Why is the Bible so enjoyable? Because it shows you the path of blessing. Maybe you should sign up today!

B. Follow God's word regardless of the circumstances

1. Most Christians live what I call “situational obedience”. Following what God has said in His word is dependent upon the situation. If there's a storm blowing in, I do my own thing. “That's crazy...see the clouds?”
2. This is why we never see the supernatural. We are stuck in the natural. We see the circumstances of life; we see what the word of God says; and there is this conflict going on in our minds between reason and faith.
3. Reason says, “This is crazy / stupid / it can't work”. Faith says, “Trust Me”. “Remember, I'm the One telling you to do this. It's not your idea”.
4. So let's take our economy as an example. God has some very clear principals / directives in His word about money and finances. He tells us that since He is the Provider for all our needs, we should be generous. That as we trust Him and give, it opens the door for God to be even more generous to us.

*II Cor. 9:8, 11 “And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others... Yes, you will be enriched so that you can give even more generously.” (NLT)*

5. So here is the faith Vs reason struggle. Reason says that in lean times we should hold on to our money, not give it away. God says that He is our Provider not the economy, so be generous anyway and trust Me.
6. We will never experience God's supernatural power in our lives until we embrace the paradoxes of the Christian life. They don't exist just in the area of finances; they exist in every area. (Love your enemy – forgive those who wound you – To live you must die – to be free you must be a slave (Explain))
7. Until we embrace the paradox, we'll never see the power of God. God's power is only available for His program NOT yours! If you're only going to follow God when it makes sense, you're going miss God doing the miraculous in your life.

*Ps. 119:35 “Make me walk along the path of Your commands, for that is where my happiness is found.” (NLT)*

- Who's program are you really following in these tough times?

## V. Defeat Your Fear By Praying In Faith

- The disciples woke Jesus up out of fear not faith. “Don’t you care?” They wanted Him to help bail. They wanted Him to help in the natural not the supernatural. They didn’t expect Him to calm the wind and waves. They were praying out of fear! It was all about survival NOT victory! That’s why Jesus rebuked them.
- How do I pray in faith?
  - A. Praying out of fear is about survival
    - God, just let me survive...
      1. It tends to be motivated by the circumstances / it’s limited in its expectations – just get me through this” - natural / Its focus is on desperation rather than dependence / the primary motive is to alleviate the pain not connect to a person. “Don’t you care...?” Fix this!!!
      2. When we pray out of fear we have a small perspective of God. Notice Jesus’ response after He calmed the storm.” *Mark 4:40* “*Why are you so afraid? Do you still not have faith in Me?*” (Jesus was too small in their eyes.)
      3. Often, we struggle with the same issue. God is just too small in our understanding. The smaller your God the greater your fear! If you’re living in fear during these economic times, your God is way too small!
      4. How are you praying in these times we find ourselves in? What are you expecting God to do? “God, where are you? Don’t you care that I’m drowning here?” Is God’s plan for our lives survival or victory?  
*Rom. 8:37* “*No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ who loved us.*” (NLT)
      5. That doesn’t sound like survival to me. Overwhelming victory can be experienced despite “all these things”...despite all the circumstances...despite the economy...despite Wall Street...Gas prices...
      6. What are your expectations during these times? Survival or Victory. God plan is for you to experience victory. Since that’s the case, let’s start praying in faith! HOW?

### B. Praying out of faith is about victory

- What does that look like?
  1. We pray anticipating God’s supernatural intervention. How often do we pray and not expect God to do anything? Remember last week we talked about “Watching and Praying?”
  2. We pray with a motive to deepen our dependence on a person not just in desperation to stop the pain. Remember, after He calmed the storm, Jesus said, “*Do you still not have faith in Me?*” It was a relational issue.

- When we pray in faith we are pressing in relationally. Our trust is in a person. **Illustrate:** When my kids were little, whenever they were afraid, they would get closer to me. Safety was about a relationship.
3. We pray with a confidence in a God who can do anything. We choose to see God's greatness and His unlimited power not just the circumstances. I choose to see the circumstances through the perspective of an All-Powerful – All-Knowing – Ever-Present God with unlimited resources who deeply Loves me!
  4. We pray knowing that God's plan for me is to overcome and experience victory not merely survive. This is His will! "God, show me how to trust You in this so that I can experience the victory that is mine through Christ!"

How have you been praying? Out of fear or faith? Maybe it's time for a change! I want to give you a 30 day challenge: Get in the word of God every day for the next 30 days and begin praying in faith for 30 days. Take your needs / fears / storms to Him, but pray in faith.

## **VI. Determine To Resist Despair By Embracing God's Promises**

- The destination was promised by Jesus. He wanted to go over to the other side. It was His idea. Just because there was a storm, there was no need to be fearful and despair. WHY? How could a storm stop what He wanted to do? How could a storm thwart the desires of the God of the Universe?
- We need to remember the same thing. Just because God has given us a direction to follow or a promise to cling to, doesn't mean there will not be challenges along the way...storms are part the journey, but the destination is guaranteed.

### **A. Don't lose sight of the destination**

1. The word of God is filled with descriptions of what God's will is for our lives. These promises constitute His destination for us. It's His will / His plan for your life.
2. Share some promises: There are financial - material promises / relational promises / emotional promises / serving promises / promises about your purpose / Promises about your future / The Bible is a book filled with promises. (Matt. 6:33 is a promise!)  
*Ps. 119:116 "Lord, sustain me as You promised, that I may live! Do not let my hope be crushed." (NLT)*  
*Ps. 18:30 "God's way is perfect. All the LORD's promises prove true. He is a shield for all who look to him for protection." (NLT)*
3. Over the years, I can't tell you how many times I have reminded God of His promises! "You said...!"
4. Storms do NOT indicate God's promises are not true. They do not prove You're out of the will of God. They simply indicate we live in a fallen world and storms are part of this life.

5. Don't lose sight of the destination. WHY? Because it's guaranteed.

B. Remember the destination was God's idea

1. Since Jesus told the disciples to go across the Sea of Galilee, it was guaranteed that they would make it. The only way they wouldn't make it to the other side was if they would have refused to go.
2. If we will simply surrender to what God wants to do in our lives, experiencing these promises is guaranteed. WHY? Because they are His idea! No circumstance can stop what God wants to accomplish. Only our willingness or unwillingness / obedience or disobedience.
3. I had a dad tell me a story this last week about parenting when his kids were young. (Share – going to the beach for the weekend – kids fighting in the back seat – told them to behave or they would go home – they didn't so he turned the car around and went home.)
4. The destination was guaranteed. They just needed to cooperate. They were passengers on a journey. How true it is with us and the journey God is taking us on. It's not our hard work and effort that makes it to the destination, it's simply our cooperation. We're not driving, God is!
6. Regardless of the storm you're in, as long as you cooperate with Him, He'll get you to the other side. You just might experience Him say to your storm, "Be still!"

## VII. Display The Glory Of God

- This isn't a navigational point, but the result when we trust God with our lives. We display the glory of God to the world. Now we're living like salt / light / witnesses / Ambassadors / disciple makers /  
*II Cor. 4:7 "But this precious treasure – this light and power that now shines within us – is held in perishable containers, that is, in our weak bodies. So everyone can see that our glorious power is from God and is not our own." (NLT)*

A. God is looking for people to display His glory

1. God is looking for people who will trust Him and walk with Him in this life so He can use these people to prove to a world that He is real. He wants to display His glory through you so everyone can see this power is not yours!
2. Will you be willing to let God display His glory through your life? Will you take these 6 navigational truths and incorporate them / live them / practice them?
3. Will you be willing to point your life towards God during this economic mess we're in so that you can experience His provision, and others can witness it?
4. Then, as you experience the power of God in your life, will you refuse to be quiet about it. Will you give credit where the credit is due? A witness is not

a witness until they open their mouth. When we experience God like this, it's easy to talk about it!

B. A world is dying to see His glory

1. How can we remain quiet when the world is in such desperate need of hope? He is calling us to be His dispensers of hope to a lost world. This is why God put this church in this community. We are here to give hope.
2. People are dying to know if there is something real to believe in. It's not that we just know the right answer. The power in our witness is that we are experiencing the right answer. This is real in us!

*Matt. 9:36 "And seeing the multitudes, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and downcast (hopeless), like sheep without a shepherd." (NASB)*

3. Let's show them the Shepherd they can have hope in!

Will you Decide to follow God's program not your own?

Will you Defeat your fear by praying in faith?

Will you Determine to resist despair by embracing God's promises?

If you will, you will experience the supernatural power of God in your own life and then we can display His glory to a community that desperately needs Him.