

Series: Stand Fast in the Lord

THE FREEDOM OF HAVING A CLEAR CONSCIENCE JOB 31

Text:

Introduction:

In this chapter Job revealed the freedom that he had in his heart because he had a clear conscience.

The fact that his conscience was clear gave him boldness and openness.

He had nothing to hide from God or anyone else and boldly proclaimed his innocence.

In verse five, he stated that if he had lied to anybody, then let the Lord weigh him on scales of justice.

He proclaimed that God knew his integrity.

In verse 21, if he harmed any orphans, then let his shoulder be wrenched out of place and his arm torn from its socket.

Verse 35 stated that if there were accusations against him, he desired they be recorded and he would face them proudly and with the confidence of a prince.

When you look through this chapter, you will find that Job's conscience was clear because he was a man who worked on having a clear conscience.

He was a man of excellent character that would put most of us to shame.

Note the things that Job addresses about Self-Control:

Sermon Content:

1. SELF-CONTROL OVER HIS PASSIONS

Job 31:1-12

¹ I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid? ² For what portion of God is there from above? and what inheritance of the Almighty from on high? ³ Is not destruction to the wicked? and a strange punishment to the workers of iniquity? ⁴ Doth not he see my ways, and count all my steps? ⁵ If I have walked with vanity, or if my foot hath hastened to deceit; ⁶ Let me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know mine integrity. ⁷ If my step hath turned out of the way, and mine heart walked after mine eyes, and if any blot hath cleaved to mine hands; ⁸ Then let me sow, and let another eat; yea, let my offspring be rooted out.

⁹ If mine heart have been deceived by a woman, or if I have laid wait at my neighbour's door; ¹⁰ Then let my wife grind unto another, and let others bow down upon her. ¹¹ For this is an heinous crime; yea, it is an iniquity to be punished by the judges. ¹² For it is a fire that consumeth to destruction, and would root out all mine increase.

Job made a covenant with his eyes, he made up his mind to not gaze upon young women with lust in his heart.

Why?

He knew that calamity, disaster, and destruction plagued those who were wicked and lived lives of iniquity.

He was also very aware that God saw everything that he did and every step he took.

There is no hiding from the Lord.

Because he had chosen to keep his heart pure, he invited God's scrutiny.

He offered to be weighed on God's scales of justice that the Lord would know he had integrity in his heart.

His conscience was clear.

He continued and stated if he had been seduced by another woman or lusted for his neighbor's wife, then let his own wife belong to another man and prepare his meals.

If you want to keep your conscience clear, if you desire to maintain control over your thought life, then make a covenant with your eyes and your mind.

Dwell upon those things that are wholesome and good.

Note:

Philippians 4:8

⁸ Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

Job demonstrated: Self-Control Over His Passions

2. SELF-CONTROL WITH HIS POWER AND POSSESSIONS

Job 31:13-23

¹³ If I did despise the cause of my manservant or of my maidservant, when they contended with me; ¹⁴ What then shall I do when God riseth up? and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him? ¹⁵ Did not he that made me in the womb make him? and did not one fashion us in the womb? ¹⁶ If I have withheld the poor from their desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail; ¹⁷ Or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof; ¹⁸ (For from my youth he was brought up with me, as with a father, and I have guided her from my mother's womb;) ¹⁹ If I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering; ²⁰ If his loins have not blessed me, and if he were not warmed with the fleece of my sheep; ²¹ If I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless, when I saw my help in the gate: ²² Then let mine arm fall from my shoulder blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone. ²³ For destruction from God was a terror to me, and by reason of his highness I could not endure.

Job 31:31-32

³¹ If the men of my tabernacle said not, Oh that we had of his flesh! we cannot be satisfied. ³² The stranger did not lodge in the street: but I opened my doors to the traveller.

Job had a clear conscience when it came to the matter of his authority with those that worked under his leadership.

He treated his workers fairly lest the Lord rise up against him. He did not abuse those who worked for him.

Job also had a clear conscience in the way he treated those who were poor and had little. He did not belittle those who did not have much.

He did not oppress them, take advantage of them, or make life more miserable for them.

He clothed and fed those who were orphans and widows from the days of his youth.

He extended hospitality to those who were traveling strangers.

He was not stingy with God's blessings. He was generous.

His conscience was so clear that he proclaimed that if he was guilty of mistreating any orphans, may his shoulder be wrenched out of joint or his arm ripped out of its socket.

Thought:

How do you treat those who are poor?

How do you treat those under your authority?

Unfortunately, some folks do not know how to handle authority.

It goes to their heads and they become like tyrants.

That is not the way to lead people, especially those who work for you.

Sadly there are many pastors who abuse their authority and lead like a tyrant.

Parents, are you abusive with your authority toward your children.

Husbands, how do you treat your wives?

Do you physically or verbally abuse her?

Such behavior is wrong and it's wicked.

Job demonstrated: Self-Control Over His Passions and His Power and Possessions.

Note also:

3. SELF-CONTROL ABOUT HIS PROSPERITY

Job 31:24-28

²⁴ If I have made gold my hope, or have said to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence; ²⁵ If I rejoiced because my wealth was great, and because mine hand had gotten much; ²⁶ If I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightness; ²⁷ And my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand: ²⁸ This also were an iniquity to be punished by the judge: for I should have denied the God that is above.

Job controlled his attitude about his money.

It did not control him. He controlled it.

Thoughts:

Have you learned to spend your money wisely?

Do you pay your bills on time?

Have you learned to work hard for what you have or do you feel everyone owes you money and should cater to your needs?

Have you learned to give to the Lord that which belongs to Him?

Do you tithe and give offerings to the Lord?

Note: Malachi 3:8-10

Malachi 3:8-10

⁸ Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. ⁹ Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. ¹⁰ Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

Job's conscience was clear about his finances.

He did not put his security in his wealth or make it the source of his happiness.

He knew that security and joy came from the Lord.

To believe that his gold gave him his happiness and security would be to deny the Lord who was the true source of these things.

Understand that your wealth and possessions can be taken from you, but your joy cannot be robbed when it comes from within your heart from the Lord.

This is why God urges us to use self-control about wealth.

Psalm 62:10

¹⁰ Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery: if riches increase, set not your heart upon them.

Psalm 52:7

⁷ Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength; but trusted in the abundance of his riches, and strengthened himself in his wickedness.

Mark 8:36

³⁶ For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

1 Timothy 6:17

¹⁷ Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;

Close:

I will close with some simple principles for self-control.

1. Resolve to Keep Your Anger under Control

Many times we say things or do things when we lose our temper.

Conquering your anger requires a concentrated effort on your part to keep your cool.

It demands concentration and your will.

I believe David knew the destructiveness of his tongue and made it a point to keep his mouth in check.

Psalm 17:3

³ Thou hast proved mine heart; thou hast visited me in the night; thou hast tried me, and shalt find nothing; I am purposed that my mouth shall not transgress.

Psalm 39:1

¹ I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me.

2. Rely on the Holy Spirit's Help and Power

Trying to maintain self-control of your tongue or thoughts in your own strength will eventually lead to defeat.

You have to have God's help.

This is why it is so important to be yielded to the Holy Spirit all throughout the day.

You may ask, “What do you mean?”

I am talking about yielding your mind, heart, soul, and lips to the Holy Spirit’s control.

Pray and ask the Lord to take control of you and to fill you with His Spirit.

Pray all throughout the day that God will empower you to control your thoughts, temper, and tongue.

Yield to the Lord’s control of your life.

Paul said in Ephesians 5:18:

Ephesians 5:18

¹⁸ And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;

We are to be yielded to His control.

3. Read and Study the Word of God Daily

Spending time reading, studying, and memorizing Scripture will go a long way in helping you to maintain self-control.

Fill your mind with God's Word.

Scripture will calm you down.

It will give you wisdom to discern your circumstances.

Memorizing and meditating on God's Word will empower you to maintain self-control over your thoughts, actions, and words.

Meditating on God's Word will fill your heart with peace and joy.

Psalm 119:11

¹¹ Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

Psalm 119:97

⁹⁷ O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.

Psalm 1:2

² But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

Jeremiah 15:16

¹⁶ Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts.

Colossians 3:16

¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

4. Refrain from People or Places of Temptation

Don't put yourself in a position where you could lose self-control or where you will be exposed to powerful temptations that could be a problem for you.

Stay away from places or from sinful, sensual people that are sources of temptation.

Do not indulge in drinking liquor or drugs.

Alcohol is one of the quickest ways to lose self-control.

Keep your head out of the lion's mouth of temptation.

Proverbs 4:14-15

¹⁴ Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. ¹⁵ Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.

Proverbs 23:29-35

²⁹ Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? ³⁰ They that

tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine.

³¹ Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. ³² At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. ³³ Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. ³⁴ Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. ³⁵ They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.

5. Resolve Unsettled Issues from Your Past

Problems from the past that are unresolved can make a person bitter, which in turn makes him prone to anger.

If past problems are financial issues, then take steps to pay the debt if you owe money to others.

Paying debts will help to free you from stress or from guilt.

If an offense that took place in the past is unresolved, then seek forgiveness for your actions or forgive your offender and release him of your anger.

Matthew 5:23-24

²³ Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee;

²⁴ Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

Mark 11:25

²⁵ And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.

Putting these five principles into practice will go a long way in helping maintain self-control in ones life.