

Red Sea Rules

Robert J Morgan

Ten God-Given Strategies for Difficult Times

“That which, like a sea, threatens to drown you, shall be a highway for your escape”----Charles Spurgeon

---READ INTRODUCTION HIGHLIGHTS

Red Sea Rule # 1---Realize That God Means for You to Be Where You Are

---Worry

Have any of you ever worried? The preacher John R. Rice said that “Worry is putting question marks where God has put periods”

Bishop Fulton J. Sheen called worry “A form of atheism, for it betrays a lack of faith and trust in God”

The Lord tests our faith, leading us into hardship. Cancer, job loss, agonizing struggles with our children, friends, family members. Why? To teach us wisdom.

Realize that when you are in a difficult place, the Lord either placed you there or allowed you to be there, for reasons perhaps known only to Himself. The same God who led you in will lead you out.

---Consider these men and women who, thru no fault of their own, found themselves beset with soul-disabling difficulties while trying to follow God:

Hagar---a single mom, forced into the desert to die

Joseph---sold into slavery in Egypt by his brothers

Moses---caught between the splendors of Egyptian royalty and the afflictions of God’s people

David---Anointed by Samuel and then pursued by Israelite troops

Hezekiah---seeking revival, was trapped by the most powerful army on earth, bent on annihilating his people

The Lord's Disciples---sailed at His command on the Sea of Galilee only to face a terror-filled night of storms and waves

The Son of Man---seeking to fulfill His Father's will, was killed on the cross

The Apostles---whipped and murdered for preaching the word of Jesus

QUOTE: Jesus said "In the world, you will have tribulation" (John 16:33)

God allows our faith to be tried. Remember that God has put us in difficult situations or has allowed us to be there, sometimes for reasons known only to Himself. You are there by God's appointment. Whether you are in a bad situation because of your own mistakes or sins or not, God wants you to be right there. Trust in God's leadings.

Red Sea Rule # 2---Be More Concerned For God's Glory Than For Your Own Relief

---Read top of page 18 about Gertrude Stein

Sometimes we are unable to extricate ourselves from a difficult situation because our natural instinct is to ask 1)How did I get into this mess and how can I get out?

2) How quickly can I solve this problem? 3) Why did this have to happen to me?

These are natural responses, but there is a better approach---instead, ask "How can God be glorified in this situation?" Look for ways to make God the focus of your efforts.

---Read top of page 21 about the blind man and Jesus

When Jesus healed the blind man, the glory of God's power was revealed.

At the onset of the most excruciating week of Jesus' life, He didn't ask "How can I get out of this? He asked "How can God be glorified?"

This is what our lives are about---to glorify His name.

Mathew Henry wrote that "God sometimes raises difficulties in the way of His people, that He may have the glory of subduing them, and helping His people over them". The Lord devises ways of turning difficulties into deliverances and problems into praise.

Psalm 50:15 "Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me"

The Lord doesn't always deliver us from our problems in the way we want Him to. He does it *HIS WAY*.

Always ask yourself this question: "How can God be glorified in the situation I am facing?"

Red Sea Rule # 3---Acknowledge Your Enemy, But Keep Your Eyes on the Lord

"The Great Tyrant has not forgotten you, and he designs your capture and re-enslavement"---Charles Spurgeon

We Methodists don't speak at all of Satan, for reasons that Satan loves. I'm sure he can't believe his good fortune, that people who come together to worship God conscientiously strive to avoid any talk of the great enemy.

Robert Morgan says "Satan pursues you with the intensity of Pharoah. He may use your friends, discouraging responses from your family, curse you with envy, tempt you where you are weakest, etc".

Acknowledge Satan's activity in your life, but do not be intimidated by him. Keep your true focus on God in all things.

James 4: 7-8 “Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you”.

The apostle Paul wrote in 1 COR 10:6 that “These things happened as examples for us” (speaking of the events at the Red Sea).

In Ephesians 6:12, Paul wrote that “Our fight is not against any physical enemy. It is against powers that are spiritual. We are up against the unseen power that controls the dark world, and spiritual agents from the very headquarters of evil”.

We always make a mistake when we acknowledge the Lord and keep our eyes on Satan. Far better to acknowledge Satan and focus on God.

When you are under assault, keep your eyes on Christ---but recognize that the devil is close by.

Red Sea Rule # 4---PRAY!

Exodus 14:10 “When pharaoh drew near, the children of Israel lifted their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians marched after them. So they were very afraid, and the children of Israel cried out to the Lord.”

Mathew Henry---“Their fear set them praying...God brings us into straits that He may bring us to our knees.”

David wrote in 2 Samuel 22:7---“In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried out to my God. He heard my voice.”

Paul wrote in Ephesians 6:18---“Pray hard and long.”

Robert Morgan writes that “Looking back over the years, I never faced a crisis in which, in response to earnest prayer, whether prolonged or instant, God did not make a way.

James 5:16---“The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and wonderful results”.

(Enter here a debate on the effectiveness of praying alone vis a vis group prayer)

Red Sea Rule # 5 Stay Calm & Confident, and Give God Time to Work

Psalm 37:7-8---“Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him. Do not fret---it only causes harm”.

As human beings, we are trained to seek the most direct human path to a solution to our problems. But often we don't give God time to work his solutions. We get in His way.

Part of waiting faithfully for God to act is keeping our emotions under control, not being impatient, not losing our temper. We are to walk by faith, not by feelings. Sometimes we must choose an attitude that is contrary to how we feel.

Dr Marilyn Lloyd-Jones wrote “I do not care what the circumstances may be, the Christian should never be agitated, the Christian should never be beside himself, the Christian should never be at his wit's end, should never be in a condition in which he has lost...it implies a lack of trust and confidence in Him.”

2 Chronicles 20: “The battle is not yours, but God's....You will not need to fight in this battle....Do not fear or be dismayed.”

Robert Morgan---“Many times we cannot solve problems, heal hurts, change circumstances or win our own battles. We must kneel in prayer and then stand to see what He will do. We must leave room for God, staying calm and giving Him time to work.”

C.H. Mackintosh---“Faith raises the soul above the difficulty, straight to God Himself, and enables one to stand still. We gain nothing by our restless and anxious efforts.”

Red Sea Rule # 6---When Unsure, Just Take the Next Logical Step by Faith

Exodus 14:15---“The Lord said to Moses “Why do you cry to me? Tell the children of Israel to go forward.”

C.H. Mackintosh---“God never gives guidance for more than two steps at a time. I must make one step, and then receive light for the next.”

Sir William Osler---“Our job is not to see what lies dimly at a distance, but to do what lies clearly at hand.”

Matthew 6:34 (Sermon on the Mount) Jesus said “Don’t be anxious about tomorrow. God will take care of your tomorrow, too. Live one day at a time.”

Missionary Isobel Kuhn---“The only fear a Christian should entertain is the fear of sin. All other fears are from Satan sent to confuse and weaken us.”

Trust God to lead you one step at a time.

Red Sea Rule # 7 Envision God’s Enveloping Presence

Exodus 14: 19-20 “The angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them. And the pillar of cloud went from before them and stood behind them. So it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. Thus it was a cloud and darkness to the one, and it gave light by night to the other, so that the one did not come near the other all that night.”

Robert Morgan---“What a perfect description of our Lord Jesus who gives light to those who trust Him and utter darkness to those who reject Him.”

Psalms 5:12 “God surrounds His people as with a shield.”

Psalms 33:22 “Lord, let your constant love surround us, for our hopes are in you alone.”

Robert Morgan---“Envision His enveloping presence, and learn to say ‘I will fear no evil for Thou ARE with me’”.

FOUR SUGGESTIONS in Mastering the Practice of the Presence of God:

1. Affirm His nearness in your heart
 - Hebrews 13:5 “I will never leave you nor forsake you”
 - Acts 18: 9-10 “Speak, and do not keep silent, for I am with you”
 - Genesis 28:15 “Behold, I am with you and will keep you always
2. Visualize God’s Presence in Your Mind
3. Access God’s Nearness Thru Prayer
4. Reflect His Presence in Your Demeanor

Envision His Enveloping Presence Right Now

Red Sea Rule # 8 Trust God to Deliver in His Own Unique Way

The crossing of the Red Sea was the Old Testament’s most dramatic object lesson, one of God’s miracles. Its simple lesson: trust God to deliver in his own unique way. It is His specialty.

Psalm 34:19 “Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all”

Deuteronomy 23:14 “The Lord your God walks in the midst of your camp, to deliver you”

Does he deliver you today from financial problems? Loss of Job? Drug/alcohol addiction? Tragic upheavals? Death of loved ones? Life threatening illness? Emotional confusion? Marital problems?

YES!---BUT we must have God’s perspective on our situations.

Isaiah 55:8 “My ways are not your ways”

Read pgs 82---84

Charles Spurgeon---“We believe in the providence of God, but we do not believe half enough in it”

Red Sea Rule # 9 View Your Current Crisis as a Faith Builder for the Future

J. Hudson Taylor---“I know He tries me only to increase my faith”.

---Trials are treadmills for the soul. Trials increase our faith thru the experience of overcoming. Faith has a cumulative quality to it.

Faith is believing what the Lord has said to us will come true.

Warren Wiersbe---“A faith that can’t be tested can’t be trusted”. We should welcome our trials so that our faith will increase.

Red Sea Rule # 10 Don’t Forget to Praise Him

Charles Spurgeon---“Wash your faith every morning in a bath of praise”

Moses and the Children of Israel sang this song to the Lord, and spoke, saying:

“I will sing to the Lord

For He has triumphed gloriously

The horse and its rider

He has thrown into the sea!

The Lord is my strength and song,

And He has become my salvation;

He is my God and I will praise Him;

My father’s God, and I will exalt Him”

Exodus 15: 1-2

God expects our gratitude for His deliverances.