Series: Influence

October 14, 2018

Message 3:

**When Crisis Hits**

2nd Corinthians 1:3,4

*Guests - Handout designed with you in mind - Info and notes especially for you - won’t call or visit -*

*Next Steps*

*Generosity*

*Notes on Handout and in YouVersion App*

**Intro:** It has been said that If you can keep your head when all about you others are losing theirs, maybe you just don't understand the situation.

Astronaut Alan Bean - 4th man to walk on the moon - also wrote - Test pilots have a litmus test for evaluating problems. When something goes wrong, they ask, "Is this thing still flying?" If the answer is yes, then there's no immediate danger, no need to overreact. When Apollo 12 took off, the spacecraft was hit by lightning. The entire console began to glow with orange and red trouble lights. There was a temptation to "Do Something!" But the pilots asked themselves, "Is this thing still flying in the right direction?" The answer was yes--it was headed for the moon. They let the lights glow as they addressed the individual problems, and watched orange and red lights blink out, one by one. That's something to think about in any pressure situation. If your thing is still flying, think first, and then act.

When you are in relationships with other people, and you desire to influence them for Jesus, there will be times when crisis will hit. How will you help them? What will you say? Do you know your limitations?

You don’t have to be a professional counselor to minister to someone going through a difficult time. If you are not a professional counselor, you certainly should not pretend to be one! I’m not. In Next Steps Step 3 we talk about a great variety of spiritual gifts - I am a Pastor and a Leader - that alone does not make me a great counselor. If ever you feel a situation is too serious for your expertise, you can still be an influence in their lives by referring them to someone who can help them better than you!

But, it many cases, you can trust the Wonderful Counselor to give you guidance so that you can be a blessing to someone in crisis.

2nd Corinthians 1:3,4 - All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is our merciful Father and the source of all comfort. He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us.

**Big Idea: Your influence can be even more powerful when crisis hits.**

We don’t want crisis - we don’t pray for it - but it’s going to happen. You can be used of the Lord to bring comfort to those in difficult situations.

Here are 10 points to remember when those opportunities arise:

**> Be ready.**

* Maintain a close personal walk with the Lord. You must be walking with the Lord to be ready in a moment’s notice to minister to someone in crisis.

Remember the sons of Sceva -

Acts 19:13-16 MSG - Some itinerant Jewish exorcists who happened to be in town at the time tried their hand at what they assumed to be Paul’s “game.” They pronounced the name of the Master Jesus over victims of evil spirits, saying, “I command you by the Jesus preached by Paul!” The seven sons of a certain Sceva, a Jewish high priest, were trying to do this on a man when the evil spirit talked back: “I know Jesus and I’ve heard of Paul, but who are you?” Then the possessed man went berserk—jumped the exorcists, beat them up, and tore off their clothes. Naked and bloody, they got away as best they could.

They tried to help others before they even knew the Lord.

- Continually be being filled with the Holy Spirit— (Ephesians 5:18)

Jesus at times was able to do what the His followers couldn’t do because He had prepared Himself through fasting when they had not … be ready! Stay prayed up! Stay filled! Sometimes the crisis can’t wait for us to fast for a few days!

* Keep those in your circle of influence and/or small group continually in your prayers— If you want to influence people, you will already be praying for them before their crisis hits.
* Stay in the Word of God - read passages from the Bible every day so that its wisdom will always be fresh in your heart and mind to guide you. Those words will come to your mind in time of need.
* Love people—ask God to give you a love for people and a burden for them.

Don’t let the burdens overwhelm you. Don’t feel as if you have to have all the answers. Just realize that God can use you to bring people to Him for strength and comfort.

**> Let the Bible be your guide.**

The Bible is the Word of God.

1st Statement - The Bible, both the Old and New Testaments, were breathed by God. It is the flawless revelation of God to humanity and is the authority for our life and faith.

The truth will set people free—

John 8:31-32 - Jesus said to the people who believed in him, “You are truly my disciples if you remain faithful to my teachings. And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

Ignorance of the Word of God can keep people from experiencing God’s freedom!

Hosea 4:6 MSG - My people are ruined because they don’t know what’s right or true.

If we are going to help people in crisis, we are not going to make decisions for them, but help them to make their own decisions with the Scriptures as their guide. But when we know the Bible, we can point them to the Scriptures that they need as the source of their wisdom.

Psalm 119:105 - Your word is a lamp to guide my feet

and a light for my path.

Psalm 119:130 - The teaching of your word gives light,

so even the simple can understand.

God gave us His Word to teach us, convict, correct and train us.

2nd Timothy 3:16 - All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right.

Don’t rely on your ideas of what might be right. Stand on the clear teaching of the Word of God—where the Scripture is silent, remain silent and don’t put extra burdens on people!

**> Stay connected with other influencers.**

Church leadership - small group leadership - don’t give away confidences, but don’t feel like you have to be the answer man by yourself. You can influence and bless others through times of crisis by getting other leaders to walk through the valley with you and the one who is hurting.

Hebrews 13:17 - Obey your spiritual leaders, and do what they say. Their work is to watch over your souls, and they are accountable to God. Give them reason to do this with joy and not with sorrow. That would certainly not be for your benefit.

Don’t let pride keep you from referring difficult situations to a person you are accountable to, such as a small group leader or pastor. We’ll be more successful helping people in trouble when we work as a team!

Simple rule that will keep you out of trouble: never counsel with someone of the opposite gender.

**> Listen**

James 1:19 - Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry.

Someone said, “God gave us two ears and one mouth—we should listen twice as much as we speak.” We can learn a lot by listening. When listening you are not jumping to a premature conclusion.

Someone else said, “Better to keep your mouth shut and be thought a fool than to open it and remove all doubt!”

* Listening will help you determine the spiritual state of the person.
* Listening will help you determine what the problem really is. Often the first item discussed is not the root cause of the problem or the heart of the issue. Listen for things NOT being said.
* Listen to the “body language” of the person.
* Listen to the Holy Spirit as you minister. He can guide you and give you revelation and insight.

Remember that a large part of counseling is listening, not dispensing advice. Often the person doesn’t really want advice and they can come to their own conclusions, they just need someone to talk to. Let them “vent.” Let them cry. Let them shout. Listen!

Listen to let them develop the right answer. Often an individual will know what the RIGHT answer is. Sometimes they are looking to someone to validate their wrong choice. Affirm people when they speak with wisdom and keep them from being deceived into a wrong choice.

**> Be hopeful.**

Romans 15:4 - Such things were written in the Scriptures long ago to teach us. And the Scriptures give us hope and encouragement as we wait patiently for God’s promises to be fulfilled.

Romans 15:13 - I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Don’t say things like, “Boy aren’t you in a big mess!” Let them know there is hope for every situation in the Word of God!

**> Teach responsibility.**

Help people understand they bear responsibility for their own actions. Healing and resolution do not come to situations where we try to pass blame onto someone or something that is not the real source of the problem. Don’t be judgmental, but be willing to help the person face the actual problem—even if it is them and their actions!

Romans 14:12 - Yes, each of us will give a personal account to God.

**> Keep private things private.**

Proverbs 11:13 - A gossip goes around telling secrets,

but those who are trustworthy can keep a confidence.

This is absolutely vital and of extreme importance! You will destroy your opportunity to influence if you cannot keep a confidence. However, let the individual know up front that if what they are about to confess is illegal, such as abuse of a minor, you bear a legal obligation to report it.

But in most circumstances, you must be trusted to keep the person’s concerns to yourself. If you feel the need to share with another leader, ask for permission. Otherwise, God trusts you!

**> Point people to Jesus!**

He is the Wonderful Counselor!

Isaiah 9:6 - For a child is born to us,

a son is given to us.

The government will rest on his shoulders.

And he will be called:

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,

Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

1st Peter 5:7 - Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you.

John 3:30 - He must become greater and greater, and I must become less and less.

You will never go wrong relying on Jesus! Don’t be afraid to pray with people, stay out of God’s way and see what He will do!

**> Help people connect to the Holy Spirit.**

Let them know they can rely upon Him as much as you do! Jesus sent Him to the earth for situations just such as they face.

John 14:16,17 - And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth... you know him, because he lives with you now and later will be in you.

Romans 5:5 - …we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love.

Have they received the gift of being saturated in the Holy Spirit?

Have you received the gift of being saturated in the Holy Spirit?

What is that? That is when God fills us up so much with His presence we can’t express our praise in our language anymore! The Holy Spirit so saturates us we are like a wet wash rag and when we get squeezed, the Holy Sprit just gushes out of us! God gives us a heavenly language to pray and praise in!

If you haven’t yet been filled this way — it’s yours for the asking! If you know Jesus, you have the Holy Spirit - but when Paul got to a place he wanted to make sure they had been totally saturated with the Holy Spirit!

Often, if a person is chronically dealing with difficulty in their lives in an unsuccessful manner, they need this dimension of relationship with God the Holy Spirit! Whether this has happened for you or not - you can pray with people who need this blessing - you may just receive it along with them!

**> Lead in confession of sin.**

James 5:16 - Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results.

The ultimate crisis is sin. The ultimate solution is reconciliation to God!

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You can help people in times of crisis! God can and will use you to be a blessing and strength to many in times of difficulty.

*(Sources for this chapter include Leadership 301, Bethany World Prayer Center, Baker, Louisiana, Pastor Larry Stockstill)*