

Close Calls & Near Misses – 10-2-24

This is F&M Worship. Tonight, we're praising . . . worshipping.

Tally was spared. Lucky? No. Blessed? **"Don't Dismiss a Near Miss"**

David, dodged Saul's spear. Mark, naked. Mary/Joseph - narrow escapes.

JOB 1 - 4 escapes: ¹⁴... a messenger came to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys were grazing nearby, ¹⁵ and the Sabeans **attacked** and made off with them. They put the servants to the sword, and **I am the only one** who has escaped to tell you!"

¹⁶ While he was still speaking, another messenger came and said, "The **fire** of God fell from the heavens & burned up the sheep & the servants & I am the **only one** who has escaped to tell you!"

¹⁷ While he was still speaking, another messenger came and said, "The Chaldeans formed three **raiding** parties and swept down on your camels and made off with them. They put the servants to the sword, and I am the **only one** who has escaped to tell you!"

¹⁸ While he was still speaking, yet another messenger came and said, "Your sons and daughters were feasting and drinking wine at the oldest brother's house, ¹⁹ when suddenly a **mighty wind** swept in from the desert and struck the four corners of the house. It collapsed on them and they are dead, and **I am the only one** who has escaped to tell you!"

Job had death & destruction all around. "Only one..." What does Job do?

²⁰ At this, Job got up and tore his robe and shaved his head. Then he fell to the ground in worship ²¹ and said: "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; may the name of the LORD be praised."

We know this b/c servants **told their stories....** They shared. Grateful to be alive!
When we are spared . . . it's time to tell our stories. Praise God! Fall/ worship.

Paul (Roman name) – know him first as Saul of Tarsus. Life radically changed.

Acts 9. Persecuting believers/prison in Jerusalem. Rd to Damascus – blind.

Spent 3 days blind...praying. Ananias – go to house on **Straight Street**.

Placed hands.... Jesus sent... you may see again & be filled w/ H.S.

Trials of life show us we've been blind – not living for Jesus. Life our way.

- They are **chances** to see life **new**, with **fresh eyes**. God is there. He's good. He's **merciful**. He gives **second chances**. New start – **Straight St.**

- Acts 9:19-20 – “Saul spent several days with the disciples in Damascus. ²⁰ **At once he began to preach** in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God”
 - o **Immediately** his life was altered. He didn’t wait. You know what happens when you wait . . . passion fades. No action.
 - o Eye opening moment: testify! Talk about God & what He’s done.
 - **Don’t let the favor of God fade.**

Saul’s preaching - baffling the Jews. Havoc. Jews conspire to kill him.

His followers took him by night & lower him in a **basket** thru city wall.

- Goes to Jerusalem; w/help from Barnabas, he joins the disciples.
- He **preached** fearlessly. He **boldly** spoke about Jesus. Another plot.
 - o Believers save his life again, **take him out of the city**, send – Tarsus.

Every rescue . . . every storm . . . every test in this life is reminder – we need God.

We aren’t in control. God is. Merciful. Not b/c of us . . . b/c of Him. Plan.

Luke 13 . . . “Jesus was informed that Pilate had murdered some people from Galilee as they were offering sacrifices at the Temple. ² “Do you think those Galileans were worse sinners than all the other people from Galilee?” Jesus asked. “Is that why they suffered? ³ Not at all! And you will perish, too, unless you repent of your sins and turn to God. ⁴ And what about the eighteen people who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them? Were they the worst sinners in Jerusalem? ⁵ No, and I tell you again that unless you repent, you will perish, too.”

Bad things happen... can’t explain. But don’t dismiss it. . . take for granted.

These times bring us to this question – what are you building your life on?

Know God – have heard the Word – but our lives don’t show it?

Matt. 7 - ²⁴ “Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵ The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. ²⁶ But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. ²⁷ The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”

Straight St. Passover – time of remembering how God saved them.

Lord’s Supper – do this in remembrance of me.

Gather for worship – we remember. We’re refreshed. We’re ready. Tell!

12 Memorial stones. When people ask, “what do these stones mean?” Tell them... **1 Pet. 3:15** – “*Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope.*”