

Compass Bearing #11
Devotions to Navigate the Coronavirus Pandemic
Moving From "What If" to "Even If" by Pastor Jeremy Duncan
Thursday, April 16, 2020

My daughter Catherine turned 16 this past December, making her eligible to get her driver's license just a few weeks ago. To her chagrin, the Coronavirus pandemic has put this BMV photo-op moment on hold for the time being. Dad hasn't been too disappointed with the delay. As much as the thought of not having to run her here and there for her various activities excites me, I have found myself crippled with so many "what ifs". What if she runs out of gas? What if her car breaks down? What if she is involved in an accident? Regardless of the age of your children, the "what ifs" seem endless as a parent, don't they?

It's often these "what ifs" of our lives that make us breathe heavy, cause our palms to sweat, and send us into a spiral of anxious emotions. Many of us spend a lifetime considering the "what ifs." These questions have a way of unsettling our hearts, destroying our peace, and leaving us insecure and worried.

This might be even more true during the more challenging seasons of our lives, such as our current COVID-19 pandemic. You may be asking yourself questions such as:

What if...

"Things don't return to normal?"

"We don't get to go back to church for a long time?"

"I get sick, or if someone I love dearly gets sick?"

"I lose my job?"

"My bank account runs dry?"

"I am unable to pay the bills?"

The uncomfortable truth is, any of those things could happen. No one, even followers of Jesus, are free from tragedy, pain, or difficulty. There are no guarantees of an easy life. Ever.

So, I suppose the question during our challenging seasons of life is this: "Is God enough?" If my health goes downhill, is God enough? If my marriage falls apart, is God enough? If I lose my job, is God enough? If I get ill from COVID-19, is God enough?

Friends, take heart today and everyday that the answer is a resounding, "YES"!

If we believe this, our mind and heart can shift from a place of "what if", to a place of "even if". Replacing "what if" with "even if" is one of the most liberating exchanges we can ever make. Even if the worst happens in my life, God is still on the throne. Even if my health fails, my Father will never fail me. Even if things do not turn back to normal soon, God's grace and love are still sufficient for me.

Our circumstances, whether good or bad, don't give the creator of the universe merit. We know what God is capable of, but even if we may not see His hand in our current circumstances, He is still our hope because of what He's already done. Nothing about our circumstances can change this.

Habakkuk 3 says this beautifully. Though he had pleaded with God to save his people, he closes his book with this exquisite "even if"...

17 For even if the fig tree doesn't blossom,
and no fruit is on the vines,

even if the olive tree fails to produce,
and the fields yield no food at all,

even if the sheep vanish from the sheep pen,
and there are no cows in the stalls;

18 still, I will rejoice in the Lord, I will take joy in the God of my salvation.

Application

- Take some time today to make a list of some of the "what ifs" in your life that are giving you anxiety and fear.
- Once you have listed some of these "what ifs", replace the words "what if" with "even if" and then complete the sentence with a promise made to you from Scripture.
- Spend some time in prayer. Take the "what ifs" of your life to the Father and ask him to help change your mind and heart to have an "even if" perspective on each of them