

“God’s Deliverance Through Leaving”

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BIG SANDY, Texas—At our Bible study on Wednesday night, I continued with a five-part series about God’s deliverance. I love talking about this subject.

In 2009, I gave a similar series in consecutive Bible studies.

In 2020, I gave a similar series in consecutive sermons. Although the five main concepts remained the same, those presentations used a variety of different verses from the Bible.

Foundational verse

This series is based upon 1 Corinthians 10:13—stressing how God is faithful.

- God will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able.
- God will make a way of escape.
- God will make you able to bear it.

Lesson of 1 Corinthians 7:21

Part 4 of this series discusses “Escape Through Leaving.”

When the apostle Paul talked about slavery in 1 Corinthians 7:21, we can learn a valuable lesson about leaving a bad situation.

Allow me to quote it from the Amplified New Testament.

1 Corinthians 7:21—“Were you a slave when you were called? Do not let that trouble you. But if you are able to gain your freedom, avail yourself of the opportunity.”

While the concept of leaving a bad situation applies to all areas of life, I will mention four situations in this article. In the Bible study, I started with the most important situation of the four—because I wanted to make sure that I covered it before running out of time.) The four are listed in order from hardest to easiest.

Leaving a marriage

Before I mention the concept of leaving a marriage, maybe I should be sure you know that I support the biblical view of marriage. Notice the following scriptures.

- Genesis 2:24
- Ephesians 5:22-33
- Matthew 5:31-32
- Matthew 19:3-9
- 1 Corinthians 7:6-15

It is my view that believers should not be quick to leave a marriage.

But it is also my view that believers should not be quick to condemn someone who has left a marriage.

- Do you remember who gave a certificate of divorce in Jeremiah 3:8?
- Malachi 2:16—It is true that God hates divorce—I assume that He hated the circumstances involving His own certificate of divorce.
- 1 Corinthians 7:11—Leaving a marriage is one thing—whether a person is eligible for remarriage is a bigger issue.

Leaving a country

While leaving a country would generate tremendous stress, this decision does not generally have the same moral importance of a person leaving a marriage.

There are some biblical examples of the urgency to leave a country.

- Genesis 12:1-5—God instructed Abram to leave his country.
- Exodus 12:33-39—The children of Israel left the slavery of Egypt in haste.
- Matthew 2:12-15—Joseph took his wife and Child to Egypt for a while.

While those examples involved God giving instruction to leave, other people make a choice themselves to leave a country—rather than continuously grumbling about their situation.

Leaving a job

For most people, leaving a job is easier than leaving a country.

- For the record, my personal worldview is living 70 years in a prosperous constitutional republic (the U.S.).
- It is wise to continue developing various practical skills and personal relationships for a potential change of jobs.

- It is wise to avoid rushing out of a job until you have a new job lined up. There are many people who have chosen to leave a job—rather than continuously grumbling about their situation.

Leaving a church organization

For most people, leaving a church organization is easier than leaving a job.

For the record, there are some individuals who have psychological hang-ups about switching church organizations—so let's understand why that is.

- Such people believe the following: "If you leave our church [physical organization], you are leaving the spiritual Body of Christ."

That idea is not true.

- Such people believe the following: "If you leave our church [physical organization], you are leaving the Living God."

That idea is not true.

Church congregations should be a place of worship, fellowship and learning.

- 2 Thessalonians 3:6-12—Withdraw (leave) if that is best for you and your family.
- 1 Timothy 6:3-5—Withdraw (leave) if that is best for you and your family.