

I. Introduction

A. Darlene Rose

1. Darlene and her husband, Russell, set out for Papua New Guinea in the late 1930s as missionaries.
2. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, she and her husband were separated and loaded into trucks.
 - a. Russell's last words to her were quoting the second part of Hebrews 13:5 "... for He has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you.""
 - b. Internment camp for the next three years
3. Play excerpt from 50:48-54:18

B. What do you do while you are waiting for God's promises to come to pass?

1. Wait it out and feel bad for yourself?
2. Recognize that God wants to do a work of transformation in you during that time?

*my story of transformation

*Where do you default? What do you choose?

II. Zechariah 7

A. Two years after chapter 1; two years before the completion of the temple

B. The question (v 3)

1. Should we continue to fast and be sad about what has happened to us?
 - a. 5th month = a religious fast to remember the destruction of the temple
 - b. Basically remembering the loss of Jerusalem and their autonomy
2. Self-focused question
 - a. Recognition of how well they "do" religion
 - b. Focus on the restoration of the temple (building) rather than the transformation of the people
 - c. When can I get what I want because you owe me that for all my sacrifice (fasting once or twice a year)?

C. The re-direct (vs 4-7)

1. "While you fasted and mourned, who did you grow and on whom was your focus?"
 - a. Are you fasting for God or simply to check a box?
 - b. When you celebrate, do you celebrate out of gratitude toward God or self-indulgence? (1 Corinthians 10:31)

"So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."

2. It's not about your outward behavior, it's about your transformation from the inside (heart) motivating the behavior outside (surrendered will).
 - a. Do you really hear God?
 - b. Are you just trying to get what you want?

D. Self-pleasing worship (characteristics)

1. Selfishness: how this benefits me or makes me feel. "I didn't get anything out of it."
2. Unwillingness: not born from desire or love but from habit, routine, or having nothing better to do, sometimes seen in tardiness (value)
3. Lethargy: no interest in excelling in worship to God; no or little effort to be present or focused
4. Guilt-clearing: doing this will "cleanse" from a week's worth of selfish living and sin; make me feel better about me

*This is not how we build an intimate and joy-filled relationship with Jesus!

E. What God has always wanted (vs 8-10)

1. Do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly (see Micah 6:8)

"He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"

- a. Render true judgments: judge according to truth without bias or partiality
- b. Show kindness and mercy: love one another and your enemy, have and show compassion to all
- c. Oppression and evil: the essence of humility is to treat others as better than yourselves—modeled by Jesus (humbled self and become servant)
2. Our inward reality with God is the prescription for spiritual growth (transformation)
 - a. Justice - how you do right based on truth
 - b. Mercy - how you do good in the absence of deserving
 - c. Humility - how you forgive and love others by knowing God

*Mr Yamaji and Darlene

- Ran the POW camp cruelly and everyone feared him
- After hearing of Darlene's husband's death, he summoned her to his office (not to console but to gloat).
- Darlene said, "Jesus died for you, Mr Yamaji, and He puts love in our hearts—even for those who are our enemies. That's why I don't hate you, Mr. Yamaji. Maybe God brought me to this place and this time to tell you He loves you."
- He removed himself from the room and she could hear him weeping. He later saved her from execution when she was accused of being a spy.
- In the 1980s, Darlene heard that Mr. Yamaji had shared the Gospel over Japanese radio.

F. Warning: Don't do what they did (vs 11-14)

1. What they did
 - a. Didn't listen
 - b. Hardened their hearts
2. What God did
 - a. Got angry (compelled to return)
 - b. Scattered them to transform them

III. Application

A. What do you do while you are waiting for God's promises to come to pass?

1. Rest of the story: play excerpt from 54:05-55:48
2. Will you become the kind of people who are ready to participate in God's Kingdom?

B. Gospel community questions

1. What are you going to do while you are waiting for God? Default, now that you know?
2. Are you a self-pleasing worshipper? Unpack your thoughts.
3. Are you the kind of person who is ready to participate in God's Kingdom, which is characterized by justice, mercy, and humility?