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Eliphaz's Ghost Story

by Tim Tripp

Remember the story of the book of Job? A godly man has great wealth and a large family until Satan asks God for permission to wreck him thinking that if he does, Job will curse God? With God's permission, Satan causes events to take place to rob Job of his wealth, his family and finally his health. In great despair, Job sat in a place where garbage was burned and covered himself with ashes in a show of overwhelming grief. Three friends came to visit him, Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar. They began by just showing their support by their presence and grieving with him. But before long they began to talk with him and try to fix his problem. To do that they encouraged Job to confess his sins and admit his guilt so that God would lift his punishment. Job firmly contended that he had committed no sin worthy of such consequence and asked that God would simply take his life and make it like he had never been born. In Job chapter four, Eliphaz gently tried to lead Job to his confession in part by telling a ghost story. Eliphaz claimed that he had seen a spirit that had posed a simple but profound question to him. It reads like this.

"A word was secretly brought to me, my ears caught a whisper of it. Amid disquieting dreams in the night when deep sleep falls on people, fear and trembling seized me and made all my bones shake.

A spirit glided past my face, and the hair on my body stood on end. It stopped but I could not tell what it was. A form stood before my eyes and I heard a hushed voice: 'Can a mortal be more righteous than God? Can even a strong man be more pure than his maker?'" (Job 4:12-17)

His point was that even if Job felt himself blameless and pure, he could not be as pure as God. He should therefore confess his sins and pray for God to heal him and restore his wealth. Job however, continued to maintain his claims of innocence and longed for an opportunity to plead his case in the courts of heaven.

While Job struggled with it, Eliphaz makes a point that should humble us all. No matter how good we may believe we are, God is better, purer, higher and more holy. Our goodness pales in comparison to his and yet his standard of good is what is set for us. In Ephesians 4:24 we are reminded that our "new self" is "created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness." But we are not going to make it there. Even the best of us fall well short of that lofty mark.

Job clearly did not appreciate the observation that his woes must have been triggered by some hidden sin. We on the other hand, unlike Job, are under the covenant of Christ. We do not subscribe to a works-based righteousness. We know that any righteousness we have has been given to us freely through the blood of Christ. We know that there are "none righteous, not even one," (Romans 3:10). He is our only hope of meeting the standard of God.

That really should leave us the opposite of boastful and proud. That should leave us on our knees and constantly aware of our shortcomings; continually repenting of our sins and openly confessing our struggles. It is only in humility that we stand before our gracious and loving God. It is only by the sacrifice of his son that we can.

The next time you might be tempted by arrogance or pride, remember Eliphaz's ghost story. Remember that grace is getting what you don't deserve.

DIOS LE BENDIGA! (God Bless You!)

by Aris Ortiz

Bendiciones mi Familia De la Fe (Blessings my Family of the Faith)

We serve a God who can do wonders, still in 2021!! Every day is a miracle to know and understand how the earth is holding in space and keeping the same trajectory that God put it in the first second of creation. Earth doesn't go away from that invisible "track", it doesn't go up, down or any other direction that God didn't intend for it to go. Same direction, same rotation since day one! We serve a God who does wonders!! That is telling us that he is still in control and that he has a purpose for everything. You and I are part of that miracle, and the same way as his creation, we have a purpose. It's so beautiful to see God's work here at West Side. The mission of the Lord's church here keeps moving forward; keeps growing and reaching nations, and the best, that some of those nations, have come here to the church back yard! Generations from those nations are being reached in one spot, and that's exactly what West Side is doing. The Hispanic Ministry here at West Side, are so blessed to be part of the body of Christ who meets here. Not only that, but so encourage of the mission to reach more souls to the Lord Jesus Christ! I just want to express the thankfulness of our heart through the words of the Apostle Paul when writing to the Corinthians in his second letter " 2 Corinthians 8:1-4 NIV[1] ... And now, brothers and sisters, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. [2] In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. [3] For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, [4] they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord's people ..."

Gathering Times

Sunday Morning 10 Am Worship
& Kids for Christ
ages 1yr-5th grade

In- Person Adult/Teen Bible Study
Wednesdays 6:30pm - Room 3 & Cornerstone

Friendship Cafe and Conversational Christianity
Sunday Mornings at 8:45

In- person Adult Bible Study
Sunday Mornings at 9am

West Side News

A new group of Kids For Christ Classes begins today, and will meet during our Worship hour.

Classes will be as follows:

1yr olds : Beth Sorrells in the nursery area

2-3 year olds : Jamie Bates, Jen Wortham - Room 16

Pre-K / Kindergarten: Judy Holman, Susan Taylor - Room 12

1st and 2nd grade: Jen Rentfro - Creator's Canvas Room

3rd - 5th grade: Janelle Miller - Museum Room

Wednesday Night will offer an Adult Class and Youth Group only (ages 6th-12th grade) and Midweek at the student center for college age

Share Group Sign-Up sheets are on the Starting Point desk in the lobby.

Please sign up *Today* if you wish to participate.

Sign up for WS emails at
westsidear.org/subscribe

Week of: 9-5-2021

Weekly Giving: \$ 13,654

Attendance

Weekly Budget: \$ 13,820

Sunday AM - 219

YTD Giving: \$ 493,131

Wednesday PM - 71

YTD Budget: \$ 497,511

Family Illness and Recovery

Danny Davis continues to recover from recent foot surgery. Please keep him in your prayers for complete healing.

Dena Moore is recovering at home from recent foot surgery. Please keep her in your prayers for a full and swift recovery.

Johnny Horton, father of Aaron Horton is doing well following triple bypass heart surgery. Please continue to keep him in your prayers as he recovers.

Sid Womack, father of Ashlee Leavell, was recently diagnosed with esophageal cancer. He is currently recovering at home following surgery. Chemo treatments will begin soon. Please pray for effective treatment and complete healing.

Maribeth French, mother of Richard French, remains in hospice comfort care following a recent stroke. Richard and Charlotte have gone to be with her at this time. Prayers for peace, comfort and strength are appreciated.

Sharon Johnson, Carol White's sister, will be entering the John Keever Solace Center in Asheville, NC soon due to a worsening of her condition. Please continue prayers for the entire family during this time.

Christy Black, Patsy Parnell's daughter, was injured in a car wreck Saturday. Please pray for rapid and complete recovery.

Sympathy:

We extend our sympathy to Richard Loveland and family in the recent loss of his brother-in-law. Please keep Richard's sister MaryAnn Greenlee of Texas and extended family in your prayers for peace and comfort in their time of loss.

Love. Share. Disciple.