

Introduction:

Today, I want to share with you a message to reflect on a profound and often painful experience that many of us have faced or may face at some point in our lives: hitting rock bottom. This phrase, "hitting rock bottom," evokes images of despair, loss, and a sense of being utterly lost. It's a place where our strength is tested, our faith is questioned, and our hope seems all but extinguished. Some people can experience rock bottom by having altering events happen such as losing custody of their child or getting arrested or other eye-opening experiences. Losing the person you have loved and devoted your life and heart to only to be betrayed, and there are no answers. It can happen in the form of a personal tragedy, horrible accident, terrible sickness, relationship crisis, job loss, or financial problem. It is often the case; a person finds their greatest inspiration in the most desperate of situations. Some of us never want to see someone we love to get to a place where they would reach that point. But it's when a person hits rock bottom, and they reach the lowest point in their lives, they are awakened to the reality that their lives must change. Sometimes God lets us hit rock bottom so that we will discover that He is the Rock at the bottom. With Jesus your lowest point can become the turning point in your life.

I. What is Rock Bottom?

- A. The term rock bottom is a description of being at the lowest point.
 - 1. The term "hitting rock bottom" originated among miners in the 19th century.
 - 2. The phrase indicated that the bedrock of the mining operation had been hit, leaving no way to go lower.
 - 3. Causes of finding Rock Bottom.
 - a. Possible substance abuse
 - b. Chronic stress and burnout
 - c. Mental health issues
 - d. Recurring cycles that impact personal progress
- B. How do you know when someone has reached rock bottom?
 - 1. They feel helpless.
 - 2. They feel hopeless.
 - 3. They lose courage to believe and trust God things will change.
 - 4. They don't care about themselves.
 - 5. It can also be when someone reaches a frame of mind that they can do the unthinkable, the unmentionable, to have their way, and have no concern of who it impacts or the consequences.
- C. King David.
 - 1. In 2 Samuel David did something he really didn't have to do.
 - a. He was a successful king.

- b. He had it all.
 - c. But it wasn't enough to keep him from doing the unthinkable.
- D. 2 Samuel 12:9-10: [Nathan:] *Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.*
1. The story of David, Bathsheba, and Uriah teaches us many lessons that are still relevant today. It reminds us of the dangers of:
 - a. Unchecked power
 - b. Corruption
 - c. And the importance of having systems and mechanisms to hold leaders accountable.
 2. David wrote Psalm 130 when he was in great distress or stressed out because of sin, after his affair of Bathsheba.
 - a. Psalm 130 MSG 1-6 *1-2 Help, GOD—I've hit rock bottom! Master, hear my cry for help! Listen hard! Open your ears! Listen to my cries for mercy. 3-4 If you, GOD, kept records on wrongdoings, who would stand a chance? As it turns out, forgiveness is your habit, and that's why you're worshiped. 5-6 I pray to GOD—my life a prayer— and wait for what he'll say and do. My life's on the line before God, my Lord, waiting and watching till morning, waiting and watching till morning.*
 3. In this Psalm, David has come to grips with the fact that he has hit rock bottom.
 - a. In verses 1 and 2, that cry is a demand to be heard, an insistence that God listen to the voice of torment.
 - b. "Pay attention to my suffering, and for heaven's sake, have mercy on me!"
Augustine, Exposition on the Book of Psalms, Psalm 130, Christian Classics Ethereal Library

II. What Is Your Rock Bottom?

- A. Rock bottom serves different people for different reasons.
 1. In rehab groups, there are places known as "High rock bottoms" and "Low rock bottoms."
 2. Here's the difference.
 - a. "Low rock bottom" means that someone has lost everything because of what they did, including their job, their belongings, and their relationships.
 - b. "High rock bottom," on the other hand, means that someone hasn't lost their stuff but has been forced to think about the results of their actions.
 - c. In both scenarios, the person has reached the bottom and is telling themselves, "I need to change."
- B. **Elijah's Rock Bottom.** I Kings 19:1-3

1. In 1 Kings 19, a strange thing happens to this man of faith. **1 Now Ahab told Jezebel everything Elijah had done and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. 2 So Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah to say, "May the gods deal with me, be it ever so severely, if by this time tomorrow I do not make your life like that of one of them."**
 2. Elijah was afraid and ran for his life.
 - a. Queen Jezebel threatens to kill Elijah.
 - b. In fear, he runs into the wilderness where he sits under a juniper tree and goes into a depression so severe that he prays for death.
 3. Jonah's Rock Bottom. Jonah 1: 1-6
 - a. It wasn't even Jonah's first instinct to pray for help during the storm when he was the only one on the ship that knew God.
 - b. The pagan captain had to wake Jonah up to pray to his god (1:6), but Jonah doesn't begin to pray until he suddenly remembered God as his life was fainting away (Jonah 2:1)!
 - c. Jonah's prayer is a reminder that even if your life isn't perfectly aligned with God's will, that God still listens and responds to your prayers. Jonah 2:2-10
 4. **King Manasseh's Rock Bottom.** 2 Chronicles 33
 - a. Manasseh was king of Judah at the age of twelve and reigned for fifty years.
 - b. He did evil before the Lord by murdering his own people and re-erecting idols his father King Hezekiah destroyed.
 - c. He led Judah in forsaking the LORD and worshiping idols. In 2 Chronicles 33, the prophet Ezra records it this way: **"While in exile, "In his distress he sought the favor of the LORD his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his ancestors. And when he prayed to him, the LORD was moved by his entreaty and listened to his plea; so he brought him back to Jerusalem and to his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD is God".** "Who was King Manasseh" www.gotquestions.org/King-Manasseh.html
 - d. Others would be Joseph the Dreamer, Manasseh, Peter the Disciple, Paul, Judas, and others.
- C. Someone at rock bottom likely may say, "It cannot get any worse."
1. Interpreted in one way, this is a declaration of despair.
 2. Interpreted another way, it is a sound confession of faith:
 - a. As awful as things are now, I know they cannot get worse because "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Rock Bottom is a Place to Begin to Build.

3. After Manasseh hit rock bottom, with God's help, he began to rebuild his life and his kingdom on the Rock he found at rock bottom (**2 Chronicles 33:14-16, 19**).
4. When the Prodigal Son came to his senses in the pigpen, he too began to rebuild his life on that solid foundation of rock bottom (**Luke 15:16-21**).
5. And do you know what Jesus expected Peter to do once he hit rock bottom? Build.
6. Our Lord said to Peter, *"I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers"* (**Luke 22:32**).
7. Even though Peter failed miserably, his faith was never overthrown.
 - a. Before Peter hit rock bottom, he was building on himself, as was the case with the Prodigal Son and Manasseh.
 - b. However, building on self is like building on sand, and those who do that will fall and great will be their fall.
 - c. There is only one place where we can build upon that is our rock, Jesus Christ, and that is at rock bottom (cf. **Matthew 5:3-6**)

III. Don't Stop Others from Hitting Rock Bottom—Let God Be God in their lives.

- A. When we've reached our lowest point, it's the ideal time to start the process of rebuilding our life.
 1. Even though we are aware of this, we try too often to keep our loved ones from reaching their lowest point.
 2. This is the classic facilitator behavior.
 3. The facilitator rescues their loved one from reaching the bottom and, as a result, denies them access to the options they needed to turn their life around.
 4. The enabler becomes the foundation of their loved one in the process.
- B. It is interesting to note that the book of Proverbs offers all sorts of advice on parenting.
 1. Never once does it instruct parents to keep their children from hitting rock bottom by fixing the children's problems.
 2. God did not keep Manasseh from hitting rock bottom, and neither did the father of the Prodigal.
 3. Even Jesus did not keep Peter from hitting rock bottom when he denied knowing Him.
 4. God, and the Father in Luke 15, and Jesus, knew their loved ones had to hit rock bottom in order to change.
 - a. I think we fear what will happen to our loved ones if they hit rock bottom. I can relate.

- b. There is a real possibility that when they hit rock bottom they will not recover.
 - c. That happened to the Rich Young Ruler (**Mark 10:17-31**) and to Judas (**Matthew 27:3-10**). However, we must put all of that into God's hands and not protect our loved ones from the very thing that will help them: hitting rock bottom.
- C. Finding God when you're at your worst doesn't change the results of what you did. I once accompanied a soldier through a rock bottom crisis. His life was chaotic; his wife had left him. He informed me he had been asking God to just make everything right; he would then serve Him always. My friend did not understand that discovering God at rock bottom did not absolve the results of his deeds. He owed it to God to serve him whether or not his wife returned. Sometimes we have to live with the fallout from the decisions that brought us to rock bottom.
- D. Even though King David had bitterly repented at his rock bottom moment in **2 Samuel 11-12:23** he had to live with the consequences of his action:
- 1. The sword would never depart from his house (**12:10-12**)
 - 2. The death of his newborn son (**12:14-23**).
 - 3. Manasseh is another example.
 - 4. While at his rock bottom, he had found God and turned his life around.
 - 5. But it was too late for Manasseh to reverse the evil example he had set for his son. The text says,
 - a. *"And [Amon] did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, as Manasseh his father had done. Amon sacrificed to all the images that Manasseh his father had made, and served him"* (**2 Chronicles 33:22**).
 - b. Even the apostle Paul had to live with the fact that at first other Christians did not trust him because of his past sins (ref. **Acts 9:13; 26**).
 - c. Just because we turn to God at rock bottom does not mean that He will bar us from suffering the consequences of our actions, and that it is okay.

IV. Jesus is the Premier Expert of delivering people from Rock Bottom

- A. Your rock bottom is never going to be so low where Jesus can't get to you.
 - 1. Where He can't save you.
 - 2. Where He can't deliver and restore you.
 - 3. Even if your life appears to be at its lowest point, there is no escape; Jesus has the capacity and desire to rescue you when you've reached your lowest point.
- B. Jesus conquered death, hell, and the grave. He preached to spirits in hell's prison to deliver them from rock bottom.
 - 1. **1 Peter 4:6**, states that the *"good tidings were proclaimed to the dead"*.

2. **1 Peter 3:18-19 (KJV)** ¹⁸For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: ¹⁹By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison.
- C. He did all of that for you so that when you're at your lowest, and you need Him the most, it's nothing for Him to come and get you.
1. Jesus knows how to quicken us when we are in our worse condition.
 2. He knows how to breathe life back into us.
 3. He knows how to find you where you are and give you a new lease on life, a hope and a future.
 4. Jeremiah 29:11 says that He desires to give you an expected end.
 5. Expect to get up and expect to come out.
- 6. This is the gift of finding rock bottom.**

Conclusion

- When you hit rock bottom, you can start making things better tomorrow.
- When things are at their worst, they can turn around in your life.
- Getting through any problem depends on how ready and brave you are to face your own "rock bottom." Even when things look bad, Jesus is still Lord.
- Are you ready to look into your darker parts? Only then can you really help other people.
- Once the old rocks in your life have finally been broken, you can start to build again on new, solid ground. *Remember the promise of God is that... **all things work together for good to them that love God**, to them who are called according to his purpose. (ref. **Romans 8:28**).*