

Allison, Lindsey, Kids & Youth Students
Northshore Sunday Morning - FFS

May 23, 2021
9:00am & 10:30am

Sermon - Allison & Lindsey
****Cars 2 movie clip** (1:15)**

Linds: I think we've all had this same feeling at least a couple of times throughout life. Where there is so much - what seems to be chaos - going on around us that we can't help but panic and frantically shout "What is happening?!!?" Well, maybe we don't walk around screaming out our anxiousness (and maybe we do. Hey! If that's what works for you, we won't judge you!) but I'm sure we can all relate to this idea of internally shouting out "what is happening?!" when life throws us a curveball.

Allison:

But, how many of you know that when life feels out of control and crazy for us, it is 100% in control for God?

Today we are titling our sermon, God is...

God is a lot of things to each of us. I bet that each one of us might have our own unique God is blank to fill in today.

I'll tell you what mine is today... God is WEIRD!!!!

Yep. I said it. I've been saying that a lot in the last couple of weeks. God has been doing things, showing up, working in ways that I've either missed or haven't seen in a little bit. He's paving pathways and not doing anything AT ALL the way that I would do it. Like, self brag, I'm a great planner. It comes naturally to me. I planned my wedding without a planner and I think I killed it. (Okay, self brag over), but I never could have coordinated anything in the way that God is doing it. I've been calling God weird.

Linds: I can definitely relate to what pastor Allison just said... sometimes God is weird and leaves me sitting here like "uhhhh...." If I can add on to this idea that 'God is weird', it's often times in those moments when God has me scratching my head that I'm also reminded that God is in charge.

Like, Allison, I am a planner. I want to know what each step is in a particular task I'm trying to accomplish, I want to know which step I'm currently on, which step is next, and what all the baby steps are that gets me from step 1 to step 2. I hate being in a place that feels unknown and foreign to me.

While I'm throwing myself a pity party in all of my uncomfortable circumstances, I'm quickly reminded that God is in charge. I can plan out all that I want to plan. I can list steps 1-100. I can sit here for hours trying to come up with the best game plan for what I think is right for my life. But at the end of the day, God is in charge. What he says goes regardless of if it fits my pre planned agenda or not.

Ultimately, isn't his plan always better than our own plan anyways though? It might have a few "what is happening" kind of moments along the way but even still, God's plan is far superior to my own because his plan provides all that we need.

Allison: I want to encourage you to keep thinking about your God is statement.

The main point that Linds and I want to touch on today is that no matter what the situation is, God is our provider. Is God providing for you?

We often call God, Jehovah Jireh, which is translated as my provider. Just say that, "Jehovah Jireh - My provider. (allow repeat)

Philippians 4:19 says, "And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus." It's just 1 verse that reflects on and states that God will provide for us.

Linds:

As me and Pastor Allison were preparing for this service we decided why just show one example of God's provision when we can show multiple examples throughout scripture where God provided.

First, We're going to jump right in and discuss a few key points in Sarah & Abraham's story. Now, we learn from Sarah and Abraham that God doesn't always operate on our timeline - isn't that the truth?! The Bible says Sarah & Abraham waited 25 years before they were given a Son - Sarah was 90 years old when she finally had Isaac.

While in this period of waiting, an angel told Abraham that he would be the Father of many nations to come. And Sarah's initial response was doubt. Sarah even laughed at

just the thought of having one child. Now, given the context of the situation and knowing that Sarah was barren and was not able to conceive/have children, I would say her response was probably pretty valid. Let me stop right here in saying that, it's okay when things don't make sense to us. It's not our job to make sense of God's plan, it's just our job to be obedient to it.

But God soon challenges her on her response by asking Abraham why Sarah laughed and then saying to him, "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" (Genesis 18:14)

Not only did God provide reassurance for Abraham by addressing the doubt and mockery that was coming from his wife. But God also provided Abraham with a timeline. The second part of this verse goes on to say, "...I will return to you at the appointed time next year, and Sarah will have a son." (Genesis 18:14)

Sometimes the way God provides for us is not always with material things. Sometimes God provides us with reassurance, peace, comfort, and guidance as we see here in Sarah and Abraham's story.

While we wrap up our first example of how God provides for us, I would challenge us all to look at the non-materialistic ways that God has provided for you today.

Allison: Now, we're going to continue on with Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac because God isn't done with them.

Abraham and Sarah have received this amazing gift from God. They're overjoyed!

Well, in Genesis 22, things get a little sticky. (Read Genesis 22:1-2)

After all this, God tested Abraham. God said, "Abraham!" "Yes?" answered Abraham. "I'm listening."

2 He said, "Take your dear son Isaac whom you love and go to the land of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains that I'll point out to you."

Hold on, God said, what?!? God, you just gave me this blessing, this child. Now you want me to do what?!?

Ya'll. I love Avery Lee with all my heart. If God asked me to do what Abraham did... Whoooo, I don't think I would have had as much faith as Abraham did. I mighta lost my Christianity over the situation.

- Abraham and Isaac and some servants are hiking to this God-given location.
- Abraham has all his supplies together and such
- They're getting closer to their destination, and his son catches on. He asks his dad, hey pop, where is the offering?
- Abraham simply says, "the Lord will provide"
- They keep on cruisin. And now, it's game time. They arrive. They prepare everything for the offering. Abraham then ties up his son, pops him up on the altar. He is literally moments away from sacrificing!

You know when you're watching a good suspense or action movie... Let's go with Marvel. Any Marvel fans in the house? Yes, so Infinity War, it's the final battle. The Avengers are getting their tail kicked and all of a sudden, Captain America hears a voice over his coms. "On your left" and the tide has changed for these heroes. Their whole crew is making their way through the portals, onto the scene, and making the most epic battle against Thanos. That's how I feel reading this scripture. God stops Abraham.

- God knew that Abraham feared and trusted the Lord. He provided an offering that wasn't Isaac in response to Abraham's obedience.

In Genesis 22:14, the Bible says that Abraham calls the place, "the Lord will provide."

Lindsey:

Our last example today is discussing one of my favorite people in the Bible, Moses. Now, I admire all the Moses type people in the world. The type of people that see a burning bush and walk TOWARDS it... and then proceeds to have a conversation with said bush. I can only imagine what other people must've thought as they witnessed Moses speaking to what appeared to be just a plant. I can relate to Moses in the sense that I am very good at pointing out my flaws and pointing out why I'm not qualified to do something even if it does not pertain to the task at hand... "Lindsey, would you like to help out at the food bank?" "No, I can't. I'm too short."

But one coolest thing that I admire about Moses... Moses survived the Nile River. Exodus 2 tells us the story of baby Moses' birth, and how his mother laid him in a basket and sent him down the Nile River in order to try and save him. Now, I personally have never been to the Nile River but I hear that there are some pretty crazy creatures floating down that river. Now, maybe it was less of Moses just being a super cool baby

and dodging all of the hungry hippos, crocodiles, large fish and whatever else swam on by him. Maybe it was less about baby Moses being lucky and more about God's provision.

Think about it, at that time, Moses was a baby. He had no concept of "danger". Sometimes God protects us from battles we aren't even aware of. That's the power of God's provision. God is always looking out for our best interest even when we aren't aware of it, even before we ever ask for it.. God is watching out for us.

Linds

Conclusion: When tested, challenged, and called by God we all have a tendency to question it a bit, right? We all ask "why" a million times, we doubt that we heard God correctly, we list out all the reasons why we are not qualified to do whatever it is God asks us to do. Even looking at our examples from today, Sarah laughed and doubted, And Moses made excuses as to why it couldn't be him.

Lindsey attaches herself to bungee

Object Lesson - Lindsey, Allison & Students

Allison: Object Lesson:

Alright well while we know that the Bible is our guidebook and is full of relevant examples, we kind of want to put some practical application behind this. Linds is getting ready down stage there and I'd like to ask some of our kids and youth to come up and help us.

Kinsley come on up to help me first. And then can I get (select 4-5 other volunteers) to come to help next and just line up on the side over here (point to stage left) until I call you.

So we have brainstormed some obstacles or some things that might hold us back and each student is going to get one of these.

Lindsey is representing each of us...

- Now, we are wanting to move forward in our lives right?! For all intents and purposes, we want to be following God's plan. But something, something just gets us... is it:
 - Doubt
 - Fear

- Self-confidence or lack of
- Lack of faith
- Self-sabotage
- Judgement from others
- Burnout, this one is real folks...
- The devil being his best self...

Linds, go ahead and move forward with your life.

Huh, is it kind of hard to move forward when so much of your life is consumed with things that aren't of God?! Is your attention divided from your initial focus?! I bet it is... bummer.

But, do we believe in a God who doesn't leave us in this shoulder-deep muck?

A pastor recently said, "when you're more focused on the problems, your faith is small... If you change your focus to God and glorify him for all the things he has done and is doing for you, your faith is stronger. Your problems don't seem as big.

Let me be the first to tell you that this revelation hit me HARD! Real talk though, this pastor was just talking about the offering... but I felt personally convicted! Problems in life are hard! It's so easy to put all our focus on those things! But what would happen if we tried to just thank God for all we do have instead.... I think God would still show up and be present in our situations. It just might not seem as dire as what we make it out to be.

So as you start to focus your attention on all that God is doing for you, you'll realize that he is already in it. (Send 1 student to seat) He is walking alongside you. (send 1 student to seat). He is providing in a way that you might not have even recognized. (send students back to seat) With God first, your problems might not seem as massive.

Slowly send students back to their seat (pick Kinsley first and send her back last)

Sermon - Allison & Lindsey cont.

Linds: Sometimes we avoid it, we refuse to acknowledge it, we allow fear, anxiety and confusion to take control and then we get mad at God because we aren't moving forward. In order to progress forward, and draw closer to God we have to be okay with being a little uncomfortable sometimes. Life is so much more doable when we let go of

those things that are holding us back. We are able to walk victoriously and confidently because we know that Jesus is the perfecter of our faith. Scripture says it like this...

(Hebrews 12:1-2)

12 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, **2** fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Allison: We encourage everyone to take this time for you and God and reflect on how God is providing for you. What is God for you?