

January 2, 2005 by Steve Brandon



Lessons from a Tsunami

Job 14:1

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Job 14:1

(and James 4:13-15; Phil. 1:12-14, 29)

- 1. Life is Few of Days.**
- 2. Life is Full of Trouble.**

For the past few years, we have spent some time with our neighbors during the Christmas season. Last Sunday evening we invited them over for a little get-together. At one point, my neighbor said, to me, "Have you heard about the tsunami that took place in the far east?" I had no idea of what he was talking about. I hadn't listened to any news reports at all. Furthermore, I had never heard of a tsunami before. This was a new word to me. He talked about some kind of oceanic earthquake. But, it didn't really register with me.

Monday morning, I picked up the Rockford Register Star and began to read about the disaster that took place when an earthquake, far out in the middle of the sea caused a massive tidal wave to sweep across south east Asia, killing many and causing great damage. It was only then that I realized what my neighbor had been telling me. Over this past week, the numbers of those who died in this tragedy has risen steadily. On Monday, it was reported that the tsunami had killed 23,000 people. By Tuesday, the count was up to 56,000. On Wednesday, it was estimated that 80,000 people had died. By Thursday, the estimates were up to 120,000. On Friday, 135,000 was the number. Yesterday, it was approaching 150,000.

In one sense, for us, life goes on. After all, this disaster struck halfway around the world. Little has changed for us. We can see the pictures. We can read the stories. We can do our little part, sending financial relief and praying. But in all of this, it seems very surreal to us, because it is so far away, as it is half-way around the world. If these events had taken place in our country, I guarantee you that if this event had taken place in our country, it would be on our mind much more than it is. To give you a perspective, in the terrorist attacks on our nation, 2,792 died. And we thought that this was a big deal. But the magnitude of this disaster is some fifty times bigger.

U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan called it "an unprecedented global catastrophe" (which isn't true in the technical sense, as Annan has not taken into account the flood, but the point is well made as to the size of the catastrophe). George W. Bush said that "The carnage is of a scale that defies comprehension." One reporter said of his flight upon a helicopter that was delivering supplies, "We passed town after town after town that looked like it had been literally flattened by an atomic bomb" (CNN's Mike Chinoy).

We may have escaped this particular disaster, being in America. But, our life is so uncertain, that there is no guarantee that we will escape the next disaster that comes our way. Perhaps some new disease will sweep across America. Perhaps years of drought will come upon our nation, threatening our food supply. Perhaps another terrorist attack will come upon us. We don't know what will come upon us. But we do know, that it is "the mere pleasure of God" that withholds the next disaster from us. [1](#)

And so, this morning, I would like for us to think about our lives. My message is entitled, "Lessons from a Tsunami." There are certainly many lessons to be learned from this past week.

1. We can learn of the awesome power of God. It is amazing the destruction that is caused by the water. And yet, the Scriptures declare, "More than the sounds of many waters, than the mighty breakers of the sea, the LORD on high is mighty" (Ps. 93:4). Don't think for a moment that the tsunami was out of the control of God or that somehow God couldn't stop it.

2. We can learn of what awaits this earth. To be sure, a flood that kills 150,000 people is a great disaster. And yet, the Lord has promised an even greater disaster to come. When the trumpets of judgment are blown, John saw that "something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea; and a third of the sea became blood; and a third of the creatures, which were in the sea and had life, died; and a third of the ships were destroyed" (Rev. 8:8-9). Such a disaster awaits the earth.

3. We can learn of the incredible mercy of God. Though many people died, it is the sovereign mercy of God that more didn't die. That only 150,000 people died is mercy. This past week I have read many stories of people that had a close brush with death, but escaped somehow. This is a great mercy, as God often uses such events to draw people to Himself. Peter told us that "the present heavens and earth by His word are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men" (2 Pet. 3:7). By the word of God, His ultimate judgement upon the earth is being withheld at the current time. This is mercy.

There are certainly many other things that we might learn from the tsunami. However, we will focus upon two simple lessons. Both of these lessons come from the same verse, Job 14:1. It really is appropriate for us to consider such a verse this morning. The first Sunday after the New Year has always been a time in which I have always sought to challenge you all in living for the Lord with your whole heart. If learned this morning, these lessons will stir us on to pursue a greater relationship with the Lord in this coming year.

Job says, "Man, who is born of woman, is short-lived and full of turmoil" (Job 14:1). I like the way that the English Standard Version says it, "Man who is born of a woman is few of days and full of trouble." There is one substance that we will have a little of. There is another substance that we will have a lot of. Our days will be few and our troubles will be full. Indeed, I will take my outline this morning from these words. (1) Life is Few of Days; (2) Life is Full of Trouble.

Jacob, the Patriarch, knew this. When Jacob brought his family to Egypt, he had an opportunity to meet Pharaoh, who asked him how old he was. He said, "few and unpleasant have been the years of my life" (Gen. 47:9). He was 130 years old when he said this. From his perspective, his days were few. From his perspective, his days were full of trouble.

Moses knew this. He wrote, "As for the days of our life, they contain seventy years, or if due to strength, eighty years, yet their pride is but labor and sorrow; for soon it is gone and we fly away" (Psalm 90:10). You might be thinking that 70 or 80 years is a long time. But in the context of Psalm 90, they come across as short. This is the Psalm that says that "from everlasting to everlasting, You are God" (verse 2). Compared to God, 80 years is nothing. This is the Psalm that says that "we have finished our years like a sigh" (verse 9). Soon it is gone (verse 10). Our days are soon gone. Our days are filled with labor and sorrow.

Solomon knew this. In despair, he cried out, "Who knows what is good for a man during his lifetime, during the few years of his futile life?" (Ecc. 6:12). (1) Life is Few of Days; (2) Life is Full of Trouble. Do you know this? Do you know what Job knew? Do you know what Jacob knew? Do you know what Moses knew? Do you know what Solomon knew? Or, do you think that your life here upon the earth is full of many days? Do you think that your life here upon the earth will be full of happy days?

Church family, you need to know that eternity will soon be upon us all. Until then, our lives will have great difficulty and suffering. This is what God has ordained for us. So, let's consider our first lesson we can learn from the tsunami, ...

1. Life is Few of Days.

Let's first consider James 4:13-15, ...

Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow, we shall go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit." Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. Instead, you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and also do this or that."

In this passage, James is addressing those who are living life apart from the realization that God is sovereign over their lives. In no way does James prohibit the planning of your life. He isn't saying that it is wrong to plan your life for the next year or so. He isn't saying that you ought only to think about today. Rather, James is pointing out the arrogance of presuming that tomorrow will be there apart from the will of the Lord. In other words, as we think and plan for our future, God always needs to be present in our thoughts and in our words. As Proverb 16:9 says, "The mind of a man plans his way, but the LORD directs his steps."

There more than 100,000 people who woke up the day after Christmas, thinking that their life would race through another day, just as it always had. And yet, it ended in a moment. They weren't expecting it to end. They were expecting go about their day. But, the Lord had another plan for their life. The Lord had decreed that on that day, they were going to breath their last. How appropriate are the words of James, "You do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away" (James 4:14).

You go outside on a cold, winter day and breathe, and vapor proceeds from your mouth. It is soon gone. So is your life. On your way home, you are stopped at a stoplight. Look at the exhaust pipe of the car in front of you. It emits a vapor that lasts for but a moment. So is your life. This is the testimony of the Scripture.

Psalm 39:5 says, "You have made my days as handbreadths, and my lifetime as nothing in Your sight. Surely every man at his best is a mere breath." A handbreadth is some four inches, the distance across your four fingers. That's how long our lives are. Our life is nothing. It is a breath. It is a vapor.

Psalm 102:11 says, "My days were like a lengthened shadow; And I wither away like grass." I remember as a child racing around our driveway at home, trying to catch my shadow. I couldn't. It was so transient. Like a flash, it was gone. I remember as a child sitting on the ground with my friends, talking about life and pulling up the grass that was on the lawn. It was so easy to do. The grass quickly died. So is your life.

Isaiah 40:6-7 says, "All flesh is like grass, and all its loveliness is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the LORD blows upon it; Surely the people are grass." Simply look outside at the grass of the field. It has withered in the cold of winter. So is your life. Wives, imagine a flower that your husband brings home for you. It is beautiful. It's lovely. A week later, it has withered away. And so, you throw it away. So is your life.

Psalm 103:15, 16 says, "As for man, his days are like grass; As a flower of the field, so he flourishes. When the wind has passed over it, it is no more; and its place acknowledges it no longer." This is the imagery that James had picked up in 1:9, 10, "Let the brother of humble circumstances glory in his high position; and let the rich man glory in his humiliation, because like flowering grass he will pass away."

It may just be that the breath of the Lord will blow upon your life this week. It may just be that you won't gather with us next Sunday morning. Now, I hope that I am not prophetic. I hope that this doesn't take place. But it could.

I spoke with my brother-in-law this past week to get the details to his story about the text that we are considering. He told me how he and his wife were involved in a couples Bible Study that met every other Friday evening. They were going through the book of James. On one particular Friday, they were studying this very passage in chapter 4, "You do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away" (4:14). I'm sure that they were thinking about the shortness of their lives in much the same way that we are this morning. They probably considered these same texts that I have quoted already. I'm sure that they thought of how our life is the distance across our hands, how our days are like a shadow, and how our flesh is like grass. They probably nodded their heads in agreement that this life is short. But, the lesson was brought home to them the next week. His wife was involved in a horrific traffic accident. Her car was totaled. She spent several days in the hospital, and finally died of her wounds. (About a year later, he married my sister. And that's how he is now my brother-in-law.)

As I was talking with my brother-in-law about this verse, "life is a vapor." He told me, "How true it is." There is a sense were my brother-in-law gets it, and I don't. There is a sense that we all don't get it, but should. Oh, may the news of 150,000 people perishing this past week teach us of this most valuable lesson: life is short (life is few of days).

My admonition to you comes from Psalm 90:12, "So teach us to number our days, that we may present to You a heart of wisdom." This is the lesson that we need to learn this morning: "teach us to number our days, that we may present to You a heart of wisdom."

When Jonathan Edwards was a young man, he wrote down 70 resolutions for his life. Several of them had to do with numbering his days, so as to live a life of wisdom. Consider several of them with me. Resolution #17 reads like this, "Resolved, that I will live so, as I shall wish I had done when I come to die." If this is how you live, you will be able to die in the day that tragedy comes in your life. Resolution #19 continues the theme, "Resolved, never to do any thing, which I should be afraid to do, if I expected it would not be above an hour before I should hear the last trump." The hope of every believer in Jesus Christ is that we might see His return. John prayed, "Come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:20). And as you think of your life as ending within the hour, there is a certain purifying effect that it will have. In the words of Moses, you will have "a heart of wisdom" when you live with these things in your mind.

My exhortation to you, church family, is that you might "number your days." There are many ways that you can do this. Jonathan Edwards thought on his own death. But, the deaths of others can do the job just as well. Charles Spurgeon once told the story of what he did with his twin boys. He said, "I took my little boys, a few years ago, to a churchyard, and we carried with us a piece of tape. I told them to measure some of the little graves, for I wanted them to learn practically how soon they might die. They found there were several which were shorter than they themselves were. Ah! there are many who are taken away before they are your age, my young friends, and why not you be so taken? It is early with you, but it is not too early for Death to be even now pointing his darts at you." [2](#)

Visit cemeteries. Go to funerals. Think of your own death. Each of these activities have a wonderful way of sobering us up to the reality of the brevity of life. Each of these activities have their own effect upon how it is that we live right now. Ecclesiastes 7:2 says, "It is better to go to a house of mourning than to go to a house of feasting, because that is the end of every man, and the living takes it to heart." A funeral is better for you than is the wedding. When you go and gaze upon the corpse in the coffin, it is a visible reminder of where you are headed. As you do, it has an effect upon your heart. It helps you to think of your end. It helps you to think of the day when you are in the coffin and others are looking at your earthly remains.

Life is Few of Days. Are you ready to die? There are many that go through life that aren't prepared to die. If anything, this tsunami that took place a week ago ought to teach us is that our lives could end very soon. There are countless scenarios that cross my mind of ways in which death could catch up with you this week. Car wrecks, falling accidents, random shootings, strokes, nuclear over-exposure, ... You name it, the list can go on and on. But the key question is this: are you ready to die?

You are ready to die when you are ready to meet God with full confidence that your sins have been forgiven. When you stand before God, your sins will be the only issue that you will care anything about. Are your sins forgiven? Or, will you be punished for your sins? This is where the gospel of Jesus Christ comes in. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ" and your sins will be forgiven. Look to Christ and what He has done. Hope and trust in Him. If you are trusting in Christ with your life, you will be ready to die. If Christ is your treasure, you will be able to say, "to live is Christ and to die is gain" (Phil. 1:21).

Let's turn our attention now to a second lesson that we can learn from the tsunami. ...

2. Life is Full of Trouble

Again, I'm taking this from Job 14:1, "Man who is born of a woman is few of days and full of trouble."

I would venture to say that the suffering in Sri Lanka and Indonesia and other countries that have been hit hard by the tsunami has only begun. The survivors of the tsunami can only anticipate incredible difficulties in the days to come. Currently, they are facing the spread of disease, from the death all around them. But, within a few weeks, that trouble will soon pass. After that, the survivors will soon face the trouble of rebuilding their communities. It took but a day to destroy everything they owned. It will take a decade to rebuild it all. Soon, the survivors will face the nagging questions for the rest of their lives. Why did this happen? Why did this happen to me? Why did I lose my family? The survivors will face the horrors of what they remembered. Images will fill their mind of the three year old son that was swept away in the water current, as his mother simply couldn't hold on to him any longer. They will remember the dead bodies that they saw floating in the water. They will remember the mass graves that they helped to dig for the masses of people who died. They will forever remember the smell of death. The rest of their days will be full of trouble.

We need to realize that what is taking place today in southeast Asia is a picture of what will come upon us. I'm not saying that America is destined for an equal disaster in the near future. I'm not predicting the end of the world. I'm simply pointing out that our lives will be full of trouble. What took place in a global sense last week, will take place in each of our lives. It's inevitable. We live on a fallen earth, where "the whole creation groans" (Rom. 8:22). Our existence is filled with trouble and suffering. Jesus said, "In the world you have tribulation" (John 16:33). Earth is not heaven. While we live here in sinful bodies, with sinful people, we will face trouble and suffering and affliction. You can

count on it.

This is especially true if you are a believer in Christ. You go through the history of the Bible and God's children have always suffered greatly. Here are a few: Job, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Elijah, Jeremiah, John the Baptist, Jesus, Peter, Stephen, Paul. They all suffered. This is a standard reality for those who trust in Christ. When Paul returned to visit the churches he planted a few weeks earlier, he told them, "through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22). This was Paul's advice to new Christians. He was telling them that if you "desire to love God in Christ Jesus, [you] will be persecuted" (2 Tim. 3:12).

Perhaps today finds you without any suffering at the moment. You may be saying in your mind, "Steve, I'm looking upon my life, and I believe that it is going pretty well. I've got years ahead of me. My body is healthy. I'm not sick. I feel pretty good. I have my video games, my cable television, and my friends. I have enough money to purchase what I need and what I want." If this is you, just give it a few years and your time of trouble will come. I guarantee you, it will. Last time I checked, the going death rate was 100%. When your body begins to decline, it will be trouble for your life.

The purpose of my message this morning is to help to prepare you for that time. Perhaps it is 10 years from now when you will face a crisis in your life. Perhaps it is this summer. Perhaps it is next month. Perhaps it is next week. Perhaps tomorrow. Suffering is closer to you than you think! And with the uncertainty of when it will come upon you, suffering is the test that you want to begin preparing for right now. Do not procrastinate in preparing for this. Start thinking about your trials and difficulties today! Right now!

In the day that your test comes, you will respond one of two ways. You will either become bitter. Or, You will become better. I've seen it. I've seen people respond to trials in a resentful way that has only brought them bitterness. I've seen people respond to trials in a right way that has made them better. If you want to get better, rather than bitter, there are two things that you need to know.

When suffering comes, ...

1. God has a purpose.

Certainly, all suffering in this world is as a result of sin. But if the promise of Romans 8:28 is true (i.e. that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God who are called according to His purpose), then there must be a good result that God will work through your suffering. You will find a tremendous comfort in knowing and believing and trusting that God has brought the trouble into your life for a purpose.

Let's look at Philippians 1:29. Paul is writing to those who are believers in Christ. And he wants to put before them God's plan and purpose for their lives. This is what he says, "For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake" (Phil. 1:29). Paul is telling these Philippians that they believe in Christ because God has given them the faith to believe. But notice also what God has given to them. He has given to them suffering, for the sake of Jesus. In other words, God has afflicted them so that Christ would get the glory.

There are many ways that suffering can bring glory to Christ. In this particular instance of the Philippians, we don't know exactly how their suffering accomplished this. But we do know how Paul's own suffering accomplished this. Paul shared this in Philippians 1:12-14, ...

Now I want you to know, brethren, that my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel, so that my imprisonment in the cause of Christ has become well known throughout the whole praetorian guard and to everyone else, and that most of the brethren, trusting in the Lord because of my imprisonment, have far more courage to speak the word of God without fear.

When Philippians was written, Paul was in prison. Because of Paul's imprisonment, the gospel went forth. Verse 13 tells of how the gospel went forth within the prison, as those guarding Paul heard the gospel from his lips. Verse 14 tells of how the gospel went forth outside of the prison. When others heard that Paul was in prison suffering for the gospel, they were emboldened to speak it more. Please notice that it was the suffering that caused these believers to believe and respond in boldness. Paul writes, "because of my imprisonment" that these things good place. God's purpose for the sufferings in Paul's life was to increase the spread of the gospel.

In speaking of the life of Adoniram Judson, John Piper said, ...

"More and more I am persuaded from Scripture and from the history of missions that God's design for the evangelization of the world and the consummation of his purposes includes the suffering of his ministers and missionaries. To put it more plainly and specifically, God designs that the suffering of his ministers and missionaries is one essential means in the joyful triumphant spread of the gospel among all the peoples of the world." [3](#)

Nowhere is this more clear than right here in Philippians 1. It was Paul's imprisonment that was the means by which the gospel spread. He said, "because of my imprisonment." This speaks of God's design and intent for the sufferings of Paul.

The world is not particularly impressed with us Christians when things are going well for us. They can easily say to themselves, "If I had everything that they had, I'd be happy too." But, the world is very impressed when we can endure suffering with joy. It causes them to take notice and inquire, "Things are going badly for you. Why are you so joyful?" It's at this point that we can speak of a heavenly joy that far surpasses the pleasures that we have here upon the earth. It's when we are afflicted that we have great opportunity to testify to our love for Jesus. This is the point of 1 Peter 3:15, "always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you." Peter pictures you suffering through some trial with an extra-worldly hope, which others see in you and then ask you about it.

It was the sufferings in prison that was the catalyst for he (and others) to be able to spread the gospel in ways far greater than if he were never imprisoned. This was the case of the Hebrews, who "accepted joyfully the seizure of [their] property, knowing that [they] had a better possession and an abiding one" (Heb. 10:34).

When suffering comes upon God's people, how easy it is for us to look inward and try to solve all of our problems, rather than looking out of ourselves to seek to discern the purpose of God in our sufferings. It may just be that your sufferings (or troubles) will be the means by which God will use you to convert another person. If you knew that this was the case, would you gladly receive your sufferings? Paul would have. This was his heart as he expressed it in Romans 9:3, "I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh."

Think about the history of the church in Philippi. Were they to write a history of their church, I believe that they would point to the imprisonment of Paul as a key means that God used to build the church in that city. Paul and Silas were in prison, suffering unjustly for the gospel. While in prison, they were singing praise to God. This certainly would have seemed strange from other people. In the first century, jails were cold, dark places. Their singing would have drawn some attention from the others prisoners and from the jailer.

Furthermore, God used a disaster (an earthquake) to give Paul and Silas a further opportunity to demonstrate a behavior that is not normal. They could have escaped, but they chose to stay. Their actions were far different than most people! Surely it was these events that God used to stir the heart of the Philippian jailer to ask them, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:30). Salvation spread to his entire household as they all believed on the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 16:34). As a result, the church in Philippi prospered through the suffering of his saints.

When suffering comes, God has a purpose. It may be for your life. It may be for the life of others. Second, when suffering comes, ...

2. You have opportunities.

When the suffering comes, it will give you great opportunities that you never had before. It gives you an opportunity to learn about God in ways that you never have known before. It give you opportunities for giving greater glory to God. It will give you opportunities to bear witness to others of your love for God. It will allow you to help others in similar circumstances.

The hymn-writer, William Williams, who wrote, "Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah," testified that "he had gained on his death-bed more knowledge of himself, and more knowledge of the goodness of God, than during the previous forty years of his life." [4](#)

Some would paint the sufferings that we endure in this life as the most dreaded thing, which must be avoided at all costs. They think that health, wealth, and prosperity are the only things that God wants in your life. Such thinking is contrary to the Scriptural teaching, which clearly states that God gives us suffering for the sake of Jesus. Long before the health, wealth, prosperity movement, Charles Spurgeon put it well, ...

"Health is set before us as if it were the great thing to be desired above all other things. Is it so? I venture to say that the greatest earthly blessing that God can give to any of us is health, with the exception of sickness. Sickness has frequently been of more use to the saints of God than health has. ... I would not wish for any man a long time of sickness; and pain; but a twist now and then one might almost ask for him. A sick wife, a newly-made grave, poverty, slander, sinking of spirit, might teach lessons nowhere else to be learned so well. Trials drive us to the realities of religion." [5](#)

The sufferings that come upon our lives are the means that God uses to teach us of himself. In 2 Corinthians 12, it was the thorn in his flesh that gave Paul the opportunity to trust Christ in ways that he never could before.

The entire life of Job demonstrates how Job was enabled to glorify God in his troubles. Satan claimed that Job only worshiped God because God had abundantly blessed him. However, it was Job's continued faithfulness through his unbelievable sufferings that gave much glory to God.

There is a way that troubles and difficulties will give you a platform to speak with other about God. We have another issue of Food for the Flock on the back table for you this morning (i.e. our monthly newsletter). Some of my favorite issues that we have produced have been those done by the Pearsons and the Guskes. Carol and Mandy spoke about their struggles with Carol's breast cancer (see [May-June 2003](#) issue). Phil and Karen Guske spoke about their struggles with Karen's Guillain-Barré Syndrome (see [September-October 2003](#) issue). In both cases, it was a great encouragement to me, to see them responding rightly to the trials that God had brought upon their lives. I trust that they have encouraged you as well. But notice how it's the suffering that created the platform to proclaim. The suffering was the means of the opportunity.

When it comes down to it, you can live one of two ways. You can play dodge ball with your life. Or, you can play duck, duck, goose with your life.

Have you ever seen kids play dodge ball? They stand far away from the centerline with their eyes wide open to the dangers that are coming their way. When a ball is coming toward them, they try to move out of the way. When you play dodge ball with life, it is no different. You go through life with your eyes wide open to the dangers that are all around you. You try beat the odds, by dodging all of the potential threats that are coming upon your life. This leads to living life in fear of the next danger that comes your way. But, sooner or later, it will catch up with you. You can't run when playing dodge ball with God. When God determines to hit you with a ball, He won't miss. And there is already a day in which He has already set in which you will be out of the game (Ps. 139:16).

You can play dodge ball with your life, or you can play duck, duck, goose. Have you ever seen children play duck, duck, goose? They sit in a

circle, as one child walks around the circle saying, "duck, duck, duck, duck, ..." At one point, this child will say "goose" and run all around the circle, while being chased by the one deemed, "goose." Have you ever noticed what children will do whenever the child walking around the circle saying, "duck, duck, duck, ..." gets near a sitting child? There is a great anticipation that the child is going to be picked. They get ready for the possibility of hearing the word, "goose" that they might get up and run around the circle. Often, the child will shift his sitting to a squat to be able to get up and run. When you play duck, duck, goose with life, it is little different. You are waiting for the day in which you will be called. You know that you probably won't be picked today, but you are ready in the event that you are picked. Furthermore, you are somewhat disappointed when you aren't picked.

What game are you playing with your life? Are you playing dodge ball? Or, are you playing duck, duck, goose?

Job 14:1 says, "Man who is born of a woman is few of days and full of trouble." Are you going to run from these realities? Or, will you be prepared for the day when the tsunami hits your life?

This sermon was delivered to Rock Valley Bible Church on January 2, 2005 by Steve Brandon.
For more information see www.rvbc.cc.

[1] Jonathan Edwards made this point very clearly in his sermon, "Sinners in the Hand of an Angry God," delivered on July 8th, 1741 at Enfield Connecticut.

[2] A Pictorial Biography of C. H. Spurgeon, pp. 53-54.

[3] "How Few There Are Who Die So Hard," an address given at the Bethlehem Conference for Pastors, February 4, 2003.

[4] As quoted by D. A. Carson in his book, "How Long, O Lord?" p. 122

[5] All-Round Ministry, chapter 12, The Minister in These Times.