

THREE THINGS I KNOW

Scripture used: [Deuteronomy 29:29 \(NIV\)](#)

OVERVIEW

Pastor Liz Walker succeeded Pastor Hurmon as senior pastor of Roxbury Presbyterian Church in Boston. She came to the ministry after a long and distinguished career in broadcast news. She was the first black woman to co-anchor a newscast in Boston, and won two Emmys and an Edward R. Murrow Award for her work. She shares a message today about the certainty we can have about life and about God, even when there are some questions that are unanswered.

KEY POINTS

- 1) Pastor Liz argued that certainties can come from mentors - ones we work with, and ones we admire from afar. For her, Ruth Bader Ginsburg and the late Rep. John Lewis were lifelong inspirations. These two role models had certainties - they were clear on what they valued, and despite suffering and obstacles they pursued their convictions, and as a result the landscape of rights and opportunities for women and civil rights for people of color were both dramatically changed and expanded. As Christians, we should know the things we are sure of and hold on to, and we should recognize that there are some things that we may never have perfect answers for. Things that are revealed to us are ours; but there are secrets that belong only to God. God tells us enough to keep moving. We accept mystery as evidence of the majesty of God. Our best response is to bow in awe and reverence. Arrogance has an answer to everything. Instead, we praise the greatness of God who is our provider and protector. In that spirit, Pastor Liz has developed three certainties from her faith and her life experience.
- 2) First certainty: **God intervenes**. It's OK to be skeptical about miracles. But God often calls, and the problem is not with the transmission but with the reception! Pastor Liz traveled to Sudan for a story on the Lost Boys of Sudan in 2001. That trip changed the course of her life. She began to reevaluate her life. She heard the humanitarian call, and the invitation to ministry. She made her way to Harvard Divinity School. When God calls, our responsibility is first to listen, and then to answer. Like Abraham, Samuel, David, Esther, and all the disciples who followed Jesus. God still calls everyday men and women to participate in the redemptive work of the kingdom of God, if we have ears to hear.
- 3) Second certainty: **Prayer matters**. In 1957, when Pastor Liz was six years old in Little Rock, Arkansas, her minister father took her to hear Dr. King preaching in his church. She later realized that the Civil Rights movement was based on individual and collective prayer. Prayer channels our deepest longings and empowers our best possibilities. Throughout Jesus' ministry, prayer was a cornerstone and a source of strength, empowerment, clarity, and perseverance. As we seek to live lives that matter for God, prayer is not optional, but essential.
- 4) Third certainty: **Love Wins in the End**. In this era of extreme polarization, we must remember to let peace, mercy, and justice be our guides. This is what will give us hope. This is captured in John Lewis' beautiful posthumous essay. [1 John 4:7-8](#) reminds us that the very essence of God is love, and because God always has the last word in our lives and in human history, we always have the hope and assurance that love will win in the end.

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - Discern your heart. Is there one promise from God that you hold on to above all? How do you usually feel about the unknowable mystery of God that is the reality alongside the things we know for sure?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - In [1 Corinthians 13](#), the whole passage is about the essence of God's love. [1 Corinthians 13:12](#) says that "For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known." How does the reality of God's love give us assurance and hope even in the face of questions we can't answer? Do you share Pastor Liz Walker's conviction that God intervenes, prayer matters, and love wins in the end? Why or why not? Based on your personal experience with God, what things are you most sure of regarding God?
- 3) **DO** - Reflect on your life from the perspective of one thing that you are sure of about God. Walk in new hope and assurance! Join us next week as Pastor Hurmon begins a new series, "Unshakeable."