

“How to Reap the Benefits of Suffering”

Sermon Reflection Questions November 8, 2009

Job - Week 2 of 2, Unlocking the Old Testament

Last week we began to address the challenge of why bad things happen to good people. We see this question addressed in the book of Job, but we also see it in our daily lives. This week we will look at the question of “How”. How should we approach the times when we are suffering?

1. We have all seen people suffer. Sometimes we are amazed at the grace and faith with which people approach their suffering and sometimes we see people who don't approach their suffering well. Who have you admired as you have watched them deal with suffering? Who has not approached their suffering well?

2. Remember from last week we talked about the positive benefits that can come from suffering.

a. What were those benefits?

b. What benefits did Job receive from his suffering?

3. What was Job's conclusion about his own suffering? (Job 42:1-6)

4. I made the claim in the message that it was ok to ask why we are going through suffering. (Read Job 3:11-23)

a. Do you agree that it is ok to ask why?

b. What stipulations, clarifications or parameters would we want to emphasize when telling someone that it is ok to ask why? (i.e. what could be the dangers or downfalls in asking why?)

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5. When we go through suffering we want to make sure our hope and trust is in God rather than in people and yet it is ok to lean on those that God has put around you. How would you make sure that in your suffering you had the right balance of hope in God and help from others?

6. Paul tells us something that at first seems absurd if we don't have a God centered view on life. He says that we are to rejoice in our suffering.

a. Read Romans 5:1-5, what is Paul's argument?

b. Have you ever been able to rejoice in suffering? Have you seen the benefits?

c. Take a negative experience from your life in which you did not rejoice. How might that experience have changed if you had taken Paul's approach to suffering?