

TRUE BELIEFS REVEALED

Sunday, May 10th

On Sunday, Pastor Donovan discussed the topic of suffering; particularly how God is always present in the midst of our suffering. Donovan said that when things are going well, it is easy to live our moral and values, but during times of suffering, our true motives are often exposed.

In the western church, our theology surrounding suffering can be weak. We often see our suffering as a personal thing. We believe that God doesn't want us to suffer, and that He will always protect us from it. But God loved the world so much that He was ready to send His son to suffer for us, and He gives us an invitation to sometimes suffers along with Him for the salvation of others.

Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble. Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing. For, "Whoever would love life and see good days must keep their tongue from evil and their lips from deceitful speech. They must turn from evil and do good; they must seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."

1 Peter 3: 8-12

Now, we have to ask ourselves: do we trust God enough? Do we believe God is in control? Does our trust and belief change the way we respond to challenges?

When Jesus was around, Peter was often temperamental, but 1 Peter, he talks about submission. He encouraged the believer to submit to the Emperor Nero and to trust God. It is easy to look at our own suffering and see it as a punishment, but Peter made it clear that the suffering we live can, and should, be used for the kingdom of God. It is not about ourselves.

But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. "Do not fear their threats; do not be frightened." But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.

1 Peter 3:14-16

God is partnering with us when we submit and trust Him. Through our suffering, people will see the hands of God at work.

DISCUSSION

- What happens when you are tested or when you face hardship? Do you compromise or go back to your old self?
- When was a time in your suffering that you felt God close to you?
- During this pandemic, how can we use our suffering to be witness of Jesus?

POSTURING

"Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working."

James 5:16

Confession: (admit, acknowledge, reveal, make known)

- In light of our conversation, is there anything that the Lord is asking you to confess and be made known?

“Praise the Lord! Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, for His steadfast love endures forever!”

Ps 106:1

Thanksgiving: (a prayer expressing gratitude)

- Thank Him for all that He has promised and for His faithfulness upon your life.

EMPOWER

“God will strengthen you with His own great power so that you will not give up when troubles come, but you will be patient. And you will joyfully give thanks to the Father who has made you able to have a share in all that He has prepared for His people in the kingdom of light.”

Colossians 1:11,12

- Pray for each other for strength, strategy, wisdom etc.
- Listen in prayer for words of encouragement and edification.
- Spur each other on!