

Group Resource

Sermon Notes – Sunday, April 21, 2013

Message: "Healing Through Adversity"

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 1:3-11

- I. The tragic events of the Boston Marathon bombing reminded us that tragedy brings out the best and the worst within us.
 - a. Tragedy causes us to evaluate our priorities and focus on the things closest to our hearts; It heightens our senses to the frailty of life and exposes our fears, our doubts, our weaknesses, and our strengths.
 - b. In times of tragedy, we can be left with a number of questions including: Where is God when evil strikes? Why would a loving God allow innocent people to be killed or injured in this tragedy? Could God have prevented all of the mayhem?
- II. As the Apostle Paul went through adversity, he encouraged the believers in Corinth with instructions on how to heal through tragedy and adversity.
 - a. Paul's circumstances were dire! He recounted that He was "under great pressure, far beyond [his] ability to endure, so that [he] despaired even of life." He described the pain as "feeling the sentence of death." (2 Cor 1:8b-9)
 - b. We must avoid looking solely to ourselves for healing when we are going through adversity. God is the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort. He is Jehovah Shammah – our refuge and strength, an ever present help in trouble. (Psalms 46).
- III. God's healing comfort is a past, present and future reality.
- IV. The past reality of God's comfort is demonstrated in God's securing of our eternal destiny. "He Has Delivered us"
 - a. Romans 5:8 reminds us that God already commanded his love toward us to save us while we were still sinners. We deserved death, but God has delivered us through Christ.
 - b. The Boston tragedy helped us to see the reality of evil and the carnage that evil can cause. God's deliverance from the power of evil and sin was not a trivial one, but it provided us the abundant grace that we needed to be in right relationship with Him.
- V. The present reality of God's comfort is His continual work on behalf of the Saints.
 - a. Believers are not exempt from adversity. The adversity doesn't come from God, but He uses it as an opportunity to demonstrate His glory.
 - b. The Believer's response to adversity is different from the world because we have a responsibility both to God and our fellow man. We are expected to not fret in the midst of tragedy but to share with others the comfort that we have received from God. Believers must still grieve, but they grieve in full assurance that God is in control of every situation that is before them.
- VI. The future reality of God's comfort is the assurance He will continue to deliver us as we experience tragedy and adversity. "Our hope is in Him"
 - a. God's ultimate deliverance is securing our eternal destiny with Him. The Apostle Paul declared, "2 Corinthians 1:10 He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us, ¹¹ as you help us by your prayers."
 - b. While believers are on this earth, we have to stay vigilant and remind ourselves that "Psalms 23:4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me."
- VII. He has delivered us, He will deliver us, and our Hope is in Him.

Group Resource

Let's Talk Notes – Week of April 21, 2013

Message: "Healing Through Adversity"

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 1:3-11

- 1) How have the events at the Boston Marathon affected you? How has it challenged your faith? What thoughts/questions are you struggling with?
- 2) As you reflect back on last weekend's sermon, what one principle or insight stands out as being particularly helpful, insightful or difficult to grasp? Were you challenged in any area of your personal walk with God?
- 3) Describe a time when God delivered you through tragedy or adversity. How did that experience shape your faith? Have you ever felt that God has left you in the midst of a tragedy or adversity? How do you process those emotions?
- 4) It is easy to believe that God has delivered us when we *avoid* tragedy and adversity but the Bible indicates that God also delivers us while we are going *through* tragedy and adversity. Name one character from the Bible that experienced adversity and describe how God delivered them *through* their experience. Why do you think that God allows us to go through adversity instead of avoiding adversity all-together?
- 5) The Apostle Paul says that God allowed them to experience adversity in order "that [they] might not rely on [them[selves but on God]." What are things that we should be doing in order to rely on God while going through adversity?
- 6) While going through tragedy and adversity, it is important to learn how to grieve in a healthy way. Unhealthy grieving turns inward and is controlled by our own emotions. Healthy grieving, on the other hand, acknowledges our emotions but submits them to God. **Read** 2 Corinthians 10:5.
- 7) Is there anyone in your group that you can comfort as they are going through tragedy and adversity?