

THAT THEY MAY BE ONE: DO NOT FEAR?

Sunday message from July 3, 2022

~ Notes & Reflections ~

We value intentional, sacrificial, faith-filled actions that achieve our purpose of embodying God's love to every neighbor.

- **We read many times in Scripture, “Do not fear”. This phrase is often in the context of engaging in the presence of God. However, we often use it in the context of posturing up our own strength, thinking we have to deny the reality of pain and ignore our humanity.**
 - ❖ How do you read and understand the phrase, “Do not fear”? Dig into your memory and reflect on how you may have applied this command in your life in the past.
 - ❖ Read a few of these passages (Deuteronomy 31.6; Joshua 1.9; Isaiah 35.4, 41.10-13; Psalm 118.6; John 14.27). In what context is the command given? How might the context shift your understanding and application of “Do not fear”?
- **The good news of Jesus is not the absence of pain. The good news of Jesus is that He steps into our pain and says, “You are not alone. You are loved.”**
 - ❖ How have you experienced these two views of Jesus’ message? What is the difference between them? What are the implications of each view?
- **Lament is a tool God gives us to courageously allow Him to enter into our pain. We see this in many of the Psalms—the worship liturgy for Israel—as they speak into the reality of life.**
 - ❖ Read Psalm 77.1-10. How do you see Asaph entering into his pain? What emotions, thoughts, questions is he verbalizing? How does this set in your mind and heart?
- **Prayer is a time to be honest not to be good. Sometimes, when we think we need to be theologically correct in our prayers, we become emotionally disconnected from God.**
 - ❖ How have you experienced prayer during times of pain? (Honesty or emotional disconnect? Digging into emotions or movement away from pain and toward numbness?) How has that impacted your connection to God?
 - ❖ What might it look like for you to courageously move toward uncomfortable emotions before God?
- **When we consistently meditate on God’s character, we start to experience God’s character personally.**
 - ❖ Read Psalm 77.11-20. How do you see Asaph remembering and pondering God’s character? What might it look like for you to remember God’s character (without explaining away your pain)?
- **“Courage is choosing to spend the rest of your life listening for and choosing to receive these words as true: ‘You are My beloved and with you I am well pleased’”. (K.J. Ramsey, [The Lord is My Courage](#))**
 - ❖ How does this definition of courage sit in your mind and heart? What might it look like for you to seek this kind of courage?
- **We can know God will be with us in our chaos because, when we were furthest from Him, Jesus showed up for us and proved His love on the cross.**
 - ❖ “Turning toward our pain is the heart of Christianity...” How do you see this in the way Jesus lived, in His interactions with people, in His crucifixion? How has Jesus made Himself known in your honesty, vulnerability, weakness?
 - ❖ What might God be inviting you into as a response to this message/reflection on courage?