

Suffering

Pastor Hanke's Blog

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Just Get Used to Suffering

Bible Reference: John 16:12-22

Has anyone ever told you to “just get used to it” when they were referring to something negative? That phrase is pretty common, but it has always seemed odd to me. Why would I want to get used to someone taking advantage of me, or whatever the negative situation might be? Sometimes we say, “I could get used to this.” Said that way it usually refers to something positive that we actually like, or a positive way we are choosing to look at a situation.

The devil loves to make us suffer. Job is a book of the Bible that shares with us Job’s story of extreme suffering. Since it is human nature to compare ourselves to others when we suffer, the book of Job provides that comparison. We think it will make us feel better if we can find someone who has had to suffer more than us. It might work for a while, but eventually the suffering is just as tough as before.

Our reading this week takes place before Jesus’ death and resurrection. Jesus was preparing His disciples for the suffering they would face after His death on the cross. He actually compares it to pregnancy and the suffering a woman goes through in the birth process. It is interesting to me that Jesus uses this to make the connection with them since they lived in a male dominated culture, but He does. I watched Mindy suffer through our pregnancies. I can tell you that after we had Maddy, our stillborn child, the suffering got worse, even after getting pregnant again. The days and months we waited for Audrey and Ellie to get here were agonizing. Mindy didn’t sleep for months worrying if Audrey would come. On the day Audrey was born I sat in a chair holding her as Mindy finally slept. She even slept with a smile on her face knowing that her baby was here safely.

Now back to the disciples. They were very close to Jesus and had spent three years following Him and learning from Him. They knew He was their Lord. When He died, they felt that disconnection and they suffered. Yet when He rose, it was like a mom seeing her newborn’s face, forgetting all the suffering she had just gone through. Can you imagine how well the disciples slept after they knew Jesus came back from the dead? After having seen Him face-to-face? How fitting that the God of life equates the feeling of seeing Jesus to seeing a newly created life for the first time!

In this life there are moments when we feel separated from God. Suffering, being a product of sin, reminds us of the separation created between Him and us. It reminds us why Jesus had to come and suffer to begin with, to take away our sin and suffering. But God has not left us—not even in our suffering. His Spirit is right here with us all the time, ready to comfort and strengthen us.

This week we take a closer look at suffering. I have walked with a number of our members lately who are suffering. We will never get used to suffering nor like the suffering we face. And that is a good thing, because not liking suffering means we strive to find the one who came to remove it from our lives—Jesus!

God's Peace,

Pastor Will