FEBRUARY 26 | RADICAL HABITS OF GRACE FOR ORDINARY LIFE: THE PRESENCE OF PAIN

MESSAGE NOTES

Note big ideas, supporting passages, and important takeaways related to spiritual formation:

SERMON WRAP-UP QUESTIONS

Immediately following the sermon, answer these questions:

What did you learn from this sermon relating to the theme of spiritual formation?

What are several practical steps you could take to grow spiritually based on what you heard from the sermon?

PRAYEXPLOREAPPLY

Disciples of Jesus allow their pain to draw them closer to God (lament & worship)

Read Psalm 73:1-28.

1. Read all of Psalm 73. How does the author begin and end this Psalm? How would you describe the author's overall perspective/attitude in between? Are you able to declare God's goodness at the front end and back end of your prayer even when the majority of your prayer is focused on your challenges? What does the beginning and end tell us about the heart of the one praying?

2. Verses 4-12 reveal that the author is envious. What are the reasons and why might we be able to sympathize with the author's perceptions that evil people seem to flourish? Why is this a common frustration with many disciples of Jesus? What might this frustration reveal about our hearts?

3. In vv. 13-14 the author makes a heartfelt statement. What is the ultimate source of pain that the author is experiencing and expressing as they consider their own lives in comparison with others? Why does this lead to personal insight (see vv. 15-17)? Why is dumping our comparisons on others a bad idea (v. 15), and why is bringing our pain to God good (v. 17)?

4. How does the author's perspective change as a result of going to God? Reading vv. 18-28, what new perspective is obtained, and how did the author's love of God increase?

5. The teachings of Jesus in His sermon on the Mount reveal what He thinks about the world's emphasis on wealth and comfort (Matthew 5-7). Skimming through His sermon, what parallels do you see with the teachings of Jesus and Psalm 73?

6. Are you ever envious of others – those who are prospering without any making any notable attempt to follow God? How does this passage help us process our thoughts, giving us the right way of viewing things? More importantly, how does pain and struggle, often lead us to God? How has this been true in your life. Share your stories and praise God with others, declaring, "God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever."

7. How does God's persistent presence and counsel help us work beyond our pain and bitterness, especially as result of comparing our lives to the experience of others.