

INTERACTING WITH THE SERMON

SYNOPSIS OF THE SERMON

Lorie preached this weekend about the rape of Tamar in 2 Samuel 13. The message was intense overall in feeling and addressed some sensitive topics such as human trafficking and sexual abuse. From this story Lorie pointed out 5 dysfunctional things that wounding families do. Wounding families repeat the sins of their fathers. The behavior that parents act out is watched closely by their children and effects their future behavior. Wounding families reduce the worth of others. They act with ultimate selfishness – the exact opposite of the character of Christ – and they do not value the other person above themselves but rather put themselves, their needs and wants ahead of others. Wounding families ruin lives. They often do not do the hard work of repentance and reconciliation. They continue to defend themselves and their image – even at the expense of everyone around them. Wounding families retaliate. Often they take the shame they feel for their own sin and use it against their victims. Wounding families respond in inappropriate ways. They refuse to act when justice is called for. They look the other way. They do not protect the weak or those in their care.

But Jesus enacts something different. He reclaims our worth by saying we are worth the price of his own death on the cross. He restores what was taken from us. He gives us new identities. Finally Jesus redeems our suffering and turns it around and gives us something beautiful.

In 5 minutes or less, briefly give a synopsis of this week's sermon. What insight, principle, or observation from this weekend's message did you find to be most helpful, eye-opening, or troubling? Explain.

GETTING THE CONVERSATION STARTED

These questions can be used as ice-breakers in the beginning OR interwoven between the questions below to draw the group into the discussion.

- What are one or two things from this weekend's sermon that really stood out to you?
- Did the sermon this week bring up any emotions you'd like to share or process? Were you moved to get more involved against human trafficking or to help victims of abuse? Did you feel helpless and unsure how to act? We'll take more time to process any personal connections you might have had to the message during ministry time.

SCRIPTURE STUDY

Context/Background Taken from Search the Scriptures

This letter was written from Macedonia (north of modern day Greece) after Paul had left Ephesus (in modern day Turkey). Paul met Timothy on his return from a trip to Corinth, and the report which Titus gave greatly relieved Paul's anxieties, especially in regard to the church's favorable reception of and action upon a severe letter that Paul had written to them. Paul still has other matters that concern him



about the church in Corinth – mainly a complaint by Jewish Christians that questioned Paul's authority and integrity. Paul knew that this attack on him was really an attack against the gospel message. Paul addresses themes of his own Christian ministry and the implications of it. He defends himself against the claims made against him and offers encouragement to the church.

Read 2 Corinthians 1:1-11

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,
To the church of God in Corinth, together with all his holy people throughout Achaia:

² Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

³ Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, ⁴ who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. ⁵ For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ. ⁶ If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in you patient endurance of the same sufferings we suffer. ⁷ And our hope for you is firm, because we know that just as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our comfort.

⁸ We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about the troubles we experienced in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired of life itself. ⁹ Indeed, we felt we had received the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead. ¹⁰ He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us again. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us, ¹¹ as you help us by your prayers. Then many will give thanks on our behalf for the gracious favor granted us in answer to the prayers of many.

- V. 3 (observation) What are the titles Paul gives to God in this verse? (*Father of compassion and the God of all comfort*)
- V. 4 (observation) What does this God do with our "troubles"? (*the word "troubles" in Greek is thlipsis which means to crush, press, compress, squeeze. It conveys the picture of something being crushed, pressed or squeezed as from a great weight. It is used to denote grievous physical affliction or mental and spiritual distress – taken from The Hebrew-Greek Key Study Bible*) (interpretation) Do you think this is an encouragement? Why or why not?
- V. 5 (observation) What does Paul say increases in Christ as our suffering increases? (*comfort*) (application) Have you experienced this personally? In a time of great suffering did you feel increased comfort? Or did you feel an absence of God? Would a few people be willing to share? (*have 1-3 people share if they are willing*)
- VV. 6-7 (interpretation) What do these verses say about how "distress," "comfort" and "suffering" effects all the brothers and sisters in the body of Christ? (*There should be a deep connection between brothers and sisters in Christ so that suffering is carried in the body and*



comfort is shared) (application) What could this look like in the church today? How can we practice this connection in our community here?

- VV. 8-9 (observation) How does Paul describe his troubles? What does Paul say the purpose of their troubles were? (*so that they would not rely on themselves but on God*)
- VV. 10-11 (observation/interpretation) Where does Paul say his hope lies? What does that hope look like? How will his hope be helped along? (*by their prayers*) (application) Does this passage encourage you? Do you feel hope that God will deliver you from your troubles? Do you have hope that God will deliver others from their troubles? Do you have more hope for others than for yourself? Why or why not?

MINISTRY APPLICATION

Below you'll see some options for ministry time with your group. We always encourage you to reserve time in your group to pray for one another and wait on the Holy Spirit.

- (Option One) Let's take some time to do as Paul suggests and "help each other by our prayers." Some folks may have shared some personal things, it might be a good idea to gather around those few people and bless them and pray for them and speak the truths in this passage over them. If fewer people shared, it would be good to break into small groups of 2-3 people and give space for people to share their responses to the sermon and this discussion and then receive prayer.
- (Option Two) Take some time to pray as a group for the victims of human trafficking. Pray that there would be a decrease in the demand for prostitution. Pray that these women and men in crisis families would find help before they get trapped in prostitution. Pray that the men and women proliferating human trafficking would be exposed and prosecuted. If you are interested in getting your group more involved with taking action in this justice issue, you can email Connie Anderson at Canderson43212@aol.com. She is our church's point person for human trafficking efforts.

