



new life fellowship

Sermon Title: Job's Dark Night
Speaker: Richard Villodas, Lead Pastor
Scripture: Job 3:1-5, 11-13, 24-26

After this, Job opened his mouth and cursed the day of his birth. He said:

“May the day of my birth perish,
and the night that said, ‘A boy is conceived!’

That day—may it turn to darkness;
may God above not care about it;
may no light shine on it.

May gloom and utter darkness claim it once more;
may a cloud settle over it;
may blackness overwhelm it.

Job 3:1-5 (NIV)

“Why did I not perish at birth,
and die as I came from the womb?
Why were there knees to receive me
and breasts that I might be nursed?
For now I would be lying down in peace;
I would be asleep and at rest

Job 3:11-13 (NIV)

For sighing has become my daily food;
my groans pour out like water.
What I feared has come upon me;
what I dreaded has happened to me.
I have no peace, no quietness;
I have no rest, but only turmoil.”

Job 3:24-26 (NIV)

Sermon Outline:

At one point or another in our all our journeys we will hit a wall. We will come to a time in our lives where we experience what is called “the dark night of the soul.” During this time, you experience a crisis of faith where there is nothing but emptiness and darkness. Where you feel as though God has abandoned you, maybe asking questions like: “God where are you?” or “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

Some of the metaphors we use to describe the Christian life:

- Christianity as a Decision. We make a decision to follow God and often get confused when we face obstacles because we believe things will go right from this point on.
- Christianity as a Battle. Every time there is a battle or test, we blame the Devil. There is a battle going on around us, but Christ is not about a battle.
- Christianity is a Journey. The Christian life is about facing ups and downs, highs and lows, praise from our mouths and tears from our eyes.

Many people are disoriented in this season just like Job. Job's response to his grief and suffering in chapter 3 takes a different turn. Where in chapters 1 and 2, we see Job throwing his face down in worship, in chapter 3 we see him cursing the day he was born - words that make most Christians cringe. Job offers a level of honesty and disorientation in his soul to God. Job is honest before the living God – which is a profound act of holiness where he is lifting up everything to God.

The act of prayer is lifting mind and heart to God, being brutally honest to God. We are to pray as we are, and scripture encourages the externalizing of grief.

Two main points to hold onto in Job 3:

- **Job demonstrates that God is after our honesty, not after our perceived notions of holiness.** Prayer is about being honest before God, not nice before God. We have been taught that our lives are to be marked by happiness and joy, stoically unaffected by life or perpetually happy. To live like this is to lie to ourselves and to others, trying so much to carry ourselves through that we miss the gift of lamenting.
- **We must read Job's story as an invitation to join those who are suffering.** The affect it is to have on our lives is to move us closer to others. Chapter 3 helps us enter the experience of others and be honest before God. *The call of the Christian life is to enter the suffering of others and encounter the God who suffers with us.*

The Psalms have been given to us so that we are able to enter the experience of someone else. Just because you are not experiencing something that does not currently reflect your own reality, does not mean that someone else is not experiencing that pain, suffering and grief. Read the Psalms and join your voice and your life to these people.

Our Lord Jesus Christ understands suffering. The Good News of Christ on the cross is that he died for us and rose from the dead so that all our suffering and pain will have an expiration date on it.

Sermon Summary:

This Sunday, Lead Pastor Richard Villodas continues our series in Job: Meeting God Through Suffering. Today Pastor Rich talks about Job's Dark Night, his honest response to God in his pain and suffering and how this is to be an example for us to be honest with God in our own suffering and grief.

Sermon Questions:

1. How does this scripture connect for you the topic that was discussed today? What words resonate with you? Why?
2. In your family of origin, were you taught if you didn't have anything nice to say, to not saying anything at all? If this was your experience, do you try and walk around constantly happy? Are you unable to express your sadness and grief to others or to God, trying to carry all of this by yourself? Find time this week to be still with God and offer this up to him, being honest with how you are feeling.
3. How do you feel when you hear that prayer is lifting heart and mind to God? Are you able to be brutally honest with God? If you are not already doing this, can you find time this week pray this way? Can you find time this week to journal your feelings, being as honest as possible?
4. How do you feel when you hear that sometimes God allows us to have difficulty in our lives? Are you experiencing a "dark night of the soul"? The life of faith is clinging to God when our experience says that God is not there. Can you cling to God right now despite what you are going through? Know that God sees you knows your pain and suffering, is with you and will never leave you.