Sermon Discussion Guide

July 1, 2012

How to Use this Guide

1. Study the Text Beforehand - Come prepared with your own observations
   - How does the passage connect to the rest of the book? To the passage immediately before it?
   - In your own words, what is Paul's point?
   - What does this passage teach you about God? About yourself? About your need for Jesus?
   - What are a couple of things that shined out to you?
   - How does this passage challenge (or confirm) your understanding? What questions did it raise?
   - What personal applications did you uncover? How does this passage call on you to change the way you live?
2. Discuss the Sermon - Work through the sermon discussion guide together and discuss the content as well as specific places that you found for application. Don't feel pressure to get through all of the questions. This guide is meant to serve you by helping to facilitate discussion.
3. Pray for one another - Pray for one another that God would help you apply the truths and personal applications you have discovered. You could also use this time for accountability. To help with accountability, be sure to grab *X-Ray Questions* by David Powlison from the Connections Desk. These questions will help you become acquainted with the lies that you believe when you give in to sin. This is not about morbid introspection - it is to help you fight for true joy and find satisfaction and hope in the promises of God the are ours because of the gospel.

Sermon Discussion

What stood out to you from the sermon? How have you been wrestling with and applying the text so far?

What questions did it raise? Where have you been struggling with the sermon?

Read Psalm 38 together

Do Not Forsake Me, O Lord

A PSALM OF DAVID, FOR THE MEMORIAL OFFERING.

[38:1] O LORD, rebuke me not in your anger,
nor discipline me in your wrath!
[2] For your arrows have sunk into me,
and your hand has come down on me.
[3] There is no soundness in my flesh
because of your indignation;
there is no health in my bones

because of my sin.
[4] For my iniquities have gone over my head;
like a heavy burden, they are too heavy for me.
[5] My wounds stink and fester
because of my foolishness,
[6] I am utterly bowed down and prostrate;
all the day I go about mourning.
[7] For my sides are filled with burning,
and there is no soundness in my flesh.
[8] I am feeble and crushed;
I groan because of the tumult of my heart.
[9] O Lord, all my longing is before you;
my sighing is not hidden from you.
[10] My heart throbs; my strength fails me,
and the light of my eyes—it also has gone from me.
[11] My friends and companions stand aloof from my plague,
and my nearest kin stand far off.
[12] Those who seek my life lay their snares;
those who seek my hurt speak of ruin
and meditate treachery all day long.
[13] But I am like a deaf man; I do not hear,
like a mute man who does not open his mouth.
[14] I have become like a man who does not hear,
and in whose mouth are no rebukes.
[15] But for you, O LORD, do I wait;
it is you, O Lord my God, who will answer.
[16] For I said, "Only let them not rejoice over me,
who boast against me when my foot slips!"
[17] For I am ready to fall,
and my pain is ever before me.
[18] I confess my iniquity;
I am sorry for my sin.
[19] But my foes are vigorous, they are mighty,
and many are those who hate me wrongfully.
[20] Those who render me evil for good
accuse me because I follow after good.
[21] Do not forsake me, O LORD!
O my God, be not far from me!
[22] Make haste to help me,
O Lord, my salvation!

Discussion Questions

Kevin shared a quote from C.S. Lewis in the *Problem of Pain*, where Lewis says, "God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks to us in our conscience, but shouts in our pain; it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world." How has God used pain to awaken you to sin or a tendency to place our hope in the things of this world?

Kevin said that most of us struggle with prayer because of sin in our lives. Why is that the case? Why do we fear drawing near to God when we sin? What does that reveal about how we are thinking about the relationship between our good works and how near we feel to God?

Kevin said that when we sin, we all either hide or pray churched up prayers in an attempt to fool him and pretend that everything is okay. When you sin, which of these two poles most characterizes you? How is it comforting, though also terrifying that God knows you and knows your sin? Why should that keep us from the pretense of hiding or pretending everything is okay? How does the gospel free us from hiding and pretense?

Psalm 38:18 seems to reveal the heart of his prayer: repentance. David says he is sorry for his sin. Often we show contrition due the consequences of the sin rather than the sin itself. What is the difference between repenting of the sin versus the consequences of the sin? Which of these typically characterize your confession and repentance?

In verse 21, David prays that God would not forsake him or be far from him. How can we be assured that God won't forsake us when we pray this prayer? In other words, how does what Jesus accomplished for us assure us God's presence and nearness? How does that comfort you in times of pain?