

Thursday - Read Romans 8:26-28 and 12:1-2. What is God doing with all the junk we go through in our lives? What is the "good" that Paul is referring to? What role does the Holy Spirit play in helping us understand what God is doing? God is always working for our good and for His glory! According to the last part of Romans 12:2, what will we discover as we lay ourselves down as living sacrifices? We need to be OK with not knowing God's ultimate plan for our lives while serving and loving Him all along the way. The depth of this faith glorifies Him and serves as a foundation stone for us in this crazy world.

Friday - Read Ecclesiastes 8:15-17. With Solomon unapologetically revealing that we don't know what the future holds, what is he challenging us to do in this passage? Why does Solomon, again, reiterate that man will not find out what God is doing? All the energy we would pour into fixing ourselves and securing a perfect future, God wants us to invest in the present; to enjoy the life that He has given us. May God lead you to this perspective and may it bless you and those all around you! Praise God from whom all blessings flow!

Life... It's Not Fair

Ecclesiastes 8:1-17

Introduction

Things are not always as they seem

The wise are willing to...

I. _____ to _____ because it's an opportunity to learn.

II. _____ the _____ because life is full of them.

III. _____ through the _____ because Father knows best.

Conclusion

*Lord, I'm drowning in a sea of perplexity.
Waves of confusion crash over me.
I'm too weak to shout for help.
Either quiet the waves or lift me above them.
It's too late to learn to swim.*

Poem by Ruth Harms Calkin

The Emmaus Road

...and he opened to us the Scriptures (Luke 24:32)

Things are not always as they seem. I know in my own life I have thought, "God, why is this happening to me?" only to look back weeks, months or even years later and understand why. As Pastor Derek shared last week there are also seasons of difficulty or distress that we won't ever understand this side of heaven.

Monday - Read Ecclesiastes 8:1-6 and Romans 13:1-7. What are these passages teaching us about submitting to authority? What is the purpose of authority? What does Solomon mean when he says, "Keep the king's command because of God's oath to him"? Whether we like it or not, according to these passages God is the author of this authority and we must submit as an act of worship and submission to Him. As we will see next, this authority also serves as a great learning opportunity for us.

Tuesday - Read I Peter 2:13-25. What is Peter's expectation in this passage? What is Peter saying about submitting to corruption? What example does Peter use as he illustrates this kind of submission. What happens when we are willing to submit like this? The authority that Peter is calling them to submit to was a man who killed Christians for sport. Yet, like Jesus, Peter calls us to entrust ourselves to the One who judges justly, to the One who will correct the injustice in His time and in His way.

Wednesday - Read Ecclesiastes 8:7-14. Why has God limited our ability to understand why certain things happen to us? What point is Solomon making in verse 12? How does verse 12 help you understand why God limits your knowledge of why things happen as they do? In other words, what is our response to Him when we have these huge questions? Are you OK with not knowing? Are you OK living with the tension of not knowing yet continuing to trust? Can you think of a time when something very difficult happened to you and something very good came out as a result?