

Saturday & Sunday, September 23 & 24, 2017 - "Three Paradoxes"- Doug Kempton

Key Passages: Colossians 1:24-29, Matthew 28:18-20

- Feel free to read the passage(s) out loud as a group
- Allow the group to share freely about what stood out to them from the passage or from Sunday's message

Main Ideas

- When we are at a breaking point (stressed, overwhelmed, tired etc.), it's usually because we put something else before Jesus
 - We can lean into "good" things and they can become idols
 - Trying to get from someone or something what only God can give (Doug's example of Meg and looking to her for unconditional love)
- If you get your vertical relationship (with God) right → every other relationship falls into place
- Colossians 1:24-29
 - Paul begins to talk about his calling and his mission
 - He gives encouragement to stay the course
- "It makes me happy to suffer for you" (Doug paraphrase of v24)
 - We are hardwired to serve others
 - Jesus as our example (he gave up attributes of being God)
 - We have to LEARN to REJOICE in our sacrifice
 - Sometimes we want acknowledgement
 - Saying something like "After all I've done for you" means we probably aren't rejoicing in suffering for and serving others
 - 1 Peter 2:21
- Paradox = a seemingly absurd or self-contradictory statement or proposition that when investigated or explained proves to be true
- 3 Paradoxes
 - 1) **Life is full when it is emptied**
 - Giving our lives away to others in the name of Jesus
 - Sacrifice for others → You get filled in the process (example of the SOAR mentors)
 - "When you serve others, you find God" - Doug
 - The church is the physical body of Christ in the world
 - There is a war adjacent Christ and the church
 - Paul says he is continuing to suffer as a part of the body of Christ and FOR the body of Christ
 - 2) **Affliction is an advantage**
 - God uses suffering of the church to advance the church (Russian pastor "pray for persecution")
 - Matt 28:18-20: Paul's commission is the same as our commission
 - Living out the Great Commission is what gives our lives meaning
 - There WILL BE persecution when we live it out
 - 3) **Jesus - EVERYTHING we believe hinges on Jesus as a paradox**
 - All power wrapped in total humility
 - Dead but resurrected
 - Fully God and fully man

Questions (Feel free to use all of these, some of these, or none of these)

1. What are you trying to get from someone or something else that you can only get from God?
2. Give an example of when having your vertical relationship (with God) right lead to other relationships falling into place.
3. When was a time when you were "happy to suffer for someone else"?
4. What have you learned about rejoicing in suffering/sacrifice?
5. How have you seen God make your affliction and advantage?
6. Talk about a time when you faced persecution for living out the great commission
7. What is God inviting you into as a result of this passage or message?

****15 Minutes with God Reading Plan-**

Mon: John 1 Tues: John 2 Wed: John 3 Thurs: John 4 Fri: John 5

****5 Minutes Reading/5 Minutes Writing/5 Minutes Praying**