



Going Deeper - Weekly Sermon Discussion Guide

Isaiah 43:19 Reimagine - A New Normal - Recap

June 28, 2020

In the time we are living, we are likely finding ourselves increasingly more uncomfortable, concerned for our future, and inconvenienced, but God is not surprised. I believe there is something sacred God wants to do in and through His people in this moment of history. Jesus said in John 16:33 "I have told you these things, so that *in me* you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." Jesus also said in John 10:10b "I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." This word "abundant" in the Greek is *perisson*, meaning "exceedingly, very highly, beyond measure, more, superfluous, a quantity so abundant as to be considerably more than what one would expect or anticipate."

In the depths of our belief, we need to embrace that the abundant life Jesus is speaking of is not void of suffering, pain, loss, confusion, sickness, or any other form of difficulty; Jesus said we will have trouble but *in him* we would *find peace*. Rather, the abundant life of God, consists of an overflow of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control, *especially* in the face of difficulty. Our overflow is a result of what happens in the secret places, and it is in these secret places of our lives that Jesus wants to transform/mature us so that we touch the world with His extravagant love and peace.

We will never accidentally become more like Jesus, rather we are compelled by the Spirit of God to become *mature* children of God. Romans 8:14 & 16 states "For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God...The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed *we share in his sufferings* in order that *we may also share in his glory*."

There are 2 Greek words the bible translates as children: "tekon" means "babies of immature sons" or children deriving their life from their parents, and "huios" which means "mature sons" representing a positional relationship, a mature child emulating a parent and in relationship with the parent. This verse in Romans 8 uses the word huios, imploring us to become mature sons and daughters. We are created in the image of God as children of God (Genesis 1:26-27) in likeness, or similarity, to God, created with unique abilities, absent in all other creatures, that mirror the divine nature of God. May we not forget we are also called to become "huios". A hurting world is desperate for The Church to emulate the lifestyle of Christ, Spirit *filled* and Spirit *formed* believers. God has called us to maturity in relationship with him, a life of true abundance.

So, Consider:

1. How might God use difficulty I am facing to mature me to become more like Christ with an overflow of the abundant life that Jesus offers? Romans 5:3-5/James 1:2-3
2. What areas of my life do I need to surrender with bold faith to trust God in the process of difficulty and replace with the practice of spiritual disciplines?
3. What disciplines Bill taught throughout this sermon series need to be tended to in my life? (consecration, hearing God's voice, sabbath, silence and solitude, attentiveness to what God is doing, reconciliation, and loving our neighbor as ourselves.)

Take Action: Write down the disciplines in your life that you identified as needing attention and what has held you back from practicing these disciplines. Commit to throwing off the things that are hindering your growth and begin to practice the disciplines you identified. Reach out to a friend to pray with you and help you process through the things that have hindered you and the disciplines you are committed to developing in your life.

On earth as it is in Heaven, Julie Briley