

Sermon Notes

Sunday April 26th, 2009

Life Group Questions

Blessings and Pain -

- To be blessed means to experience God's joy
- To experience pain is to suffer emotional discomfort and/or distress
- Zechariah & Elizabeth and Mary & Joseph all experienced both joy and pain

Luke 1: 5 – 20

- The time of Herod was a dark time
- Zechariah (priest) married to Elizabeth (daughter of a priest)
- They were righteous and obedient before God
- Yet they were childless - much pain and humiliation
- God gave them a son - John the Baptist
- The blessing came after much pain

Luke 1: 26 – 38

- The blessing of giving birth to the Messiah
- The pain of opposition, a sword piercing Mary's soul (2:35)
- The humiliation and gossip that Joseph and Mary would experience

Lessons -

1. God is at work - even in dark times
2. All people carry pain in their lives
3. We are called to remain faithful in the midst of disappointments
4. We can experience God's joy even as we carry pain

1. *Describe a time when your prayers went unanswered. Has it turned out well or are you still hoping that God will answer as you would like? How do you cope with unanswered prayer?*
2. *Is it possible to live in our world and not carry emotional pain?*
3. *Describe a time when God carried you in the midst of your emotional pain*
4. *How hard is it to remain faithful to God when you carry a disappointment with the way things have gone?*
5. *God directly intervened in the lives of Elizabeth and Mary. Describe a time when God directly intervened in your life.*