

Beauty in the Barrenness

The Embassy Church - Small Group Notes – Sunday, May 12, 2019

The journey of motherhood has many lessons. In this message Pastor Justine Stratton shares her story of experiencing joy in birth, barrenness through the wilderness, and hope in the blessings when trusting in God.

Blessings!

Scriptures – All Scriptures New Living Translation

2 Corinthians 1:3-10

³ All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is our merciful Father and the source of all comfort. ⁴ He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us.

⁵ For the more we suffer for Christ, the more God will shower us with his comfort through Christ. ⁶ Even when we are weighed down with troubles, it is for your comfort and salvation! For when we ourselves are comforted, we will certainly comfort you. Then you can patiently endure the same things we suffer. ⁷ We are confident that as you share in our sufferings, you will also share in the comfort God gives us.

⁸ We think you ought to know, dear brothers and sisters, about the trouble we went through in the province of Asia. We were crushed and overwhelmed beyond our ability to endure, and we thought we would never live through it. ⁹ In fact, we expected to die. But as a result, we stopped relying on ourselves and learned to rely only on God, who raises the dead. ¹⁰ And he did rescue us from mortal danger, and he will rescue us again. We have placed our confidence in him, and he will continue to rescue us.

Romans 8:28-39

²⁸ And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them. ²⁹ For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. ³⁰ And having chosen them, he called them to come to him. And having called them, he gave them right standing with himself. And having given them right standing, he gave them his glory.

³¹ What shall we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be against us? ³² Since he did not spare even his own Son but gave him up for us all, won't he also give us everything else? ³³ Who dares accuse us whom God has chosen for his own? No one—for God himself has given us right standing with himself. ³⁴ Who then will condemn us? No one—for Christ Jesus died for us and was raised to life for us, and he is sitting in the place of honor at God's right hand, pleading for us.

³⁵ Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Does it mean he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death? ³⁶ (As the Scriptures say, "For your sake we are killed every day; we are being slaughtered like sheep.") ³⁷ No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us.

³⁸ And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. ³⁹ No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

There is always purpose in our pain and it's always great when we can give our struggles a purpose.

Main Points

- 1) Find Your Strength
- 2) Finding Your Purpose
- 3) Finding Your Trust

Digger Deeper - Discussion Questions

Revelation

- How does God strengthen us?
- How does God sustain us during *wilderness* and *barren* times?
- How does God comfort us in troubles? (2 Corinthians 1:3-10)
 - What are the benefits of finding comfort in God?

Interpretation

- What happens when we take matters into our hands? (Instead of giving them to God).
- What are the advantages of *trusting* God?
- Why is it hard to trust in God's word?
- How does Romans 8:28-39 encourage us to trust God?

Application

- Pastor Justine listed three ways to "Finding Your Trust" in God. What are they?
- Are there areas in your life where you need to find *comfort* in God?
- Where do you find your *strength, purpose* and *trust*?
- Where is your *place* where you hear God speak to you?

Quotable Quotes

- Being a Mom is sometimes like riding around with your kids as they are trying to get hurt.
- If you're going through a hard time, it's going to get better. That is the only option.