

ADVERSITY GOSPEL #7 – DON'T WASTE YOUR PAIN

Sermon by Todd Lester

March 19, 2017

Galatians 3:4 Have you experienced so much for nothing? Surely it was not in vain, was it?

We need to p_____ from our p_____, h_____ our h_____,
a_____ from a_____, l_____ from our l_____,
i_____ from i_____, g_____ from our p_____

PAIN CAN BE USED FOR A GOOD PURPOSE

1. I CAN USE MY PAIN TO DRAW CLOSER TO _____

2 Corinthians 1:8-10, 2 Corinthians 7:9

Stages: 1. S_____: e_____ it to God 2. S_____: c____ out to God
3. S_____: a_____ with God 4. S_____: t_____ God
5. S_____: u_____ by God

2. I CAN USE MY PAIN TO DRAW CLOSER TO _____

Galatians 6:2

Levels of Fellowship: s_____, s_____, s_____, s_____

3. I CAN USE MY PAIN TO BECOME _____

Proverbs 20:30 (GNT), Hebrews 5:8, Hebrews 5:9, 2 Corinthians 11:23-28,
2 Corinthians 4:16-18

You learn p_____ from having to w_____
You learn j_____ in g_____ situations
You learn l_____ in u_____ situations
You learn p_____ in c_____

Pain can make you b_____ or b_____,
it can be a s_____ b_____ or a s_____ s_____.

4. I CAN USE MY PAIN TO _____

2 Corinthians 1:4-6

5. I CAN USE MY PAIN AS A _____

Philippians 1:12, Psalm 73:23, Psalm 73:26

Conclusion: We can use our pain to k_____ Christ, l_____ Christ,
g_____ in Christ, s_____ Christ, and s_____ Christ.

ADVERSITY GOSPEL #7 – DON'T WASTE YOUR PAIN

Sermon by Todd Lester

March 19, 2017

Galatians 3:4 Have you experienced so much for nothing? Surely it was not in vain, was it?

We need to p_____ from our p_____, h_____ our h_____,
a_____ from a_____, l_____ from our l_____,
i_____ from i_____, g_____ from our p_____

PAIN CAN BE USED FOR A GOOD PURPOSE

1. I CAN USE MY PAIN TO DRAW CLOSER TO _____

2 Corinthians 1:8-10, 2 Corinthians 7:9

Stages: 1. S_____: e_____ it to God 2. S_____: c____ out to God
3. S_____: a_____ with God 4. S_____: t_____ God
5. S_____: u_____ by God

2. I CAN USE MY PAIN TO DRAW CLOSER TO _____

Galatians 6:2

Levels of Fellowship: s_____, s_____, s_____, s_____

3. I CAN USE MY PAIN TO BECOME _____

Proverbs 20:30 (GNT), Hebrews 5:8, Hebrews 5:9, 2 Corinthians 11:23-28,
2 Corinthians 4:16-18

You learn p_____ from having to w_____
You learn j_____ in g_____ situations
You learn l_____ in u_____ situations
You learn p_____ in c_____

Pain can make you b_____ or b_____,
it can be a s_____ b_____ or a s_____ s_____.

4. I CAN USE MY PAIN TO _____

2 Corinthians 1:4-6

5. I CAN USE MY PAIN AS A _____

Philippians 1:12, Psalm 73:23, Psalm 73:26

Conclusion: We can use our pain to k_____ Christ, l_____ Christ,
g_____ in Christ, s_____ Christ, and s_____ Christ.

ADVERSITY GOSPEL #7 – DON'T WASTE YOUR PAIN

Sermon by Todd Lester

March 19, 2017

Galatians 3:4 Have you experienced so much for nothing? Surely it was not in vain, was it?

We need to profit from our problems, harvest our hurts,
advance from adversity, learn from our losses,
improve from injuries, gain from our pain

PAIN CAN BE USED FOR A GOOD PURPOSE

1. I CAN USE MY PAIN TO DRAW CLOSER TO GOD

2 Corinthians 1:8-10 We were crushed and overwhelmed beyond our ability to endure, and we thought we would never live through it. In fact, we expected to die. But as a result, we stopped relying on ourselves and learned to rely only on God... We have placed our confidence in him, and he will continue to rescue us.

2 Corinthians 7:9 Now I am glad ... not because it hurt you, but because the pain caused you to repent and change your ways.

Stages: 1. Shock: express it to God 2. Struggle: argue with God
3. Sorrow: cry out to God 4. Surrender: trust God
5. Sanctification: used by God

2. I CAN USE MY PAIN TO DRAW CLOSER TO OTHERS

Galatians 6:2 Share each other's burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ.

Levels of Fellowship: studying, sharing, serving, suffering

3. I CAN USE MY PAIN TO BECOME LIKE JESUS

Proverbs 20:30 (GNT) Sometimes it takes a painful experience to make us change our ways.

Hebrews 5:8 Even though Jesus was God's Son, he learned obedience from the things he suffered.

Hebrews 5:9 In this way, God qualified him as a perfect High Priest, and he became the source of eternal salvation for all those who obey him.

2 Corinthians 11:23-28 I have worked harder, been put in prison more often, been whipped times without number, and faced death again and again. Five different times the Jewish leaders gave me thirty-nine lashes. Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked. Once I spent a whole night and a day adrift at sea. I have traveled on many long journeys. I have faced danger from rivers and from robbers. I have faced danger from my own people, the Jews, as well as from the Gentiles. I have faced danger in the cities, in the deserts, and on the seas. And I have faced danger from men who claim to be believers but are not. I have worked hard and long, enduring many sleepless nights. I have been hungry and thirsty and have often gone without food. I have shivered in the cold, without enough clothing to keep me warm. Then, besides all this, I have the daily burden of my concern for all the churches.

2 Corinthians 4:16-18 That is why we never give up. Though our bodies are dying, our spirits are being renewed every day. For our present troubles are small and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us a glory that vastly outweighs them and will last forever! So we don't look at the troubles we can see now; rather, we fix our gaze on things that cannot be seen. For the things we see now will soon be gone, but the things we cannot see will last forever.

You learn patience from having to wait

You learn joy in grief situations

You learn love in unlovely situations

You learn peace in chaos

Pain can make you bitter or better,
it can be a stumbling block or a stepping stone.

4. I CAN USE MY PAIN TO HELP OTHERS

2 Corinthians 1:4-6 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. For the more we suffer for Christ, the more God will shower us with his comfort through Christ. 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.

5. I CAN USE MY PAIN AS A WITNESS TO THE WORLD

Philippians 1:12 And I want you to know, my dear brothers and sisters, that everything that has happened to me here has helped to spread the Good News.

Psalms 73:23 I still belong to you; you hold my right hand.

Psalms 73:26 My health may fail, and my spirit may grow weak, but God remains the strength of my heart; he is mine forever.

Conclusion: We can use our pain to know Christ, love Christ,
grow in Christ, serve Christ, and share Christ.

THE ADVERSITY GOSPEL #7 – DON'T WASTE YOUR PAIN

Sermon by Todd Lester

March 19, 2017

Icebreaker/Introduction

I recommend viewing some youtube videos (or portions of videos) that pertain to overcoming difficult situations with God's help. Nick Vujicic videos are especially good for this (he was born without limbs). Check out https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0_sU-Xf--vs or the beginnings of <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PiEBMhjyZk8&t=364s> or <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e0oRBKbRYnY&t=472s>.

Reflect on the question that Todd asked: Have grown from your pain? Can you think of a time when you've gone through pain or problems and have experienced change or growth as a result? Is it probably true that we only can see that growth afterwards (perhaps even years later)?

We need to: profit from our problems, harvest our hurts, advance from adversity, learn from our losses, improve from injuries, gain from our pain

PAIN CAN BE USED FOR A GOOD PURPOSE

1. I CAN USE MY PAIN TO DRAW CLOSER TO GOD

Focuses on [2 Corinthians 1:8-10](#), [2 Corinthians 7:9](#)

Read [2 Corinthians 1:8-10](#). Why do you think that we have this tendency to rely on ourselves instead of on God?

Stages: 1. Shock: express it to God 2. Struggle: argue with God 3. Sorrow: cry out to God 4. Surrender: trust God
5. Sanctification: used by God (note: this 5th stage was not mentioned by Todd this week, but has been previously)

Todd said we can worship (focus on God) at every stage of grief. In what ways is it helpful to turn to Him continually throughout the process? How can we practically make this happen?

Todd pointed out that many people have come to Christ out of pain (he mentioned divorce, death, disaster, difficulty, and disappointment). Can you think of an example of someone you know (or yourself?) for whom this is true? Do you know of people who have done the opposite (ie. fallen away from faith) because of a painful situation?

2. I CAN USE MY PAIN TO DRAW CLOSER TO OTHERS

Focuses on [Galatians 6:2](#)

Read [Galatians 6:2](#). What did Todd say is 'the law of Christ'? (to love our neighbours as ourselves). Could there be other explanations for this phrase?

Todd stated that suffering can sensitize us, deepen us, transform us. Have you experienced this in your life?

Levels of Fellowship: studying, sharing, serving, suffering Recall how Todd explained that each of these levels represents a deeper level of fellowship. What things can get in the way of sharing in another person's suffering? Do you find it difficult to be vulnerable with others? Have you grown closer to another person because of a shared painful experience?

Do you agree with Todd's statement that feelings are neither right or wrong? How have you learned that? Todd said that most arguments with married couples have to do with feelings – would you agree?

3. I CAN USE MY PAIN TO BECOME LIKE JESUS

Focuses on [Proverbs 20:30 \(GNT\)](#), [Hebrews 5:8](#), [Hebrews 5:9](#), [2 Corinthians 11:23-28](#), [2 Corinthians 4:16-18](#)

Recall some of the things that Todd said Jesus experienced (loneliness, being misunderstood, criticism, judgement, being maligned, fatigued, tempted). Is there one thing from this list that resonates more with you? Why?

Todd said that there are some things that we can only learn through pain. What would be some examples of this?

You learn patience from having to wait You learn joy in grief situations You learn love in unlovely situations

You learn peace in chaos

Pain can make you bitter or better, it can be a stumbling block or a stepping stone.

Do you think that there certain types of pain that are more likely to make a person bitter? (chronic pain, unchangeable situations?)

Can you remember what Todd said was the secret of success? (resilience). Why did Todd say that it was a dumb idea to make statements like "I'll never let another man hurt me"? (while it cuts you off from being hurt, it also cuts you off from being loved). Is it maybe more acceptable/wiser to say "I'll never let this particular person hurt me again"?

Do you agree with Todd's statement that if you can see that your pain has a purpose then it is easier to handle? Is it likely true that it is challenging to see the purpose in the midst of the pain? Is pain easier to handle if you know it is going to be temporary?

4. I CAN USE MY PAIN TO HELP OTHERS

Focuses on [2 Corinthians 1:4-6](#)

What examples have you seen, in your life or the lives of others, where someone who is going through a difficult experience has been helped by someone who has had a similar challenge?

Just showing up is an important way to support a person in pain. How much more valuable is it when the person showing up has gone through the same problem? Do they need to say anything to be a support or is their presence enough?

5. I CAN USE MY PAIN AS A WITNESS TO THE WORLD

Focuses on [Philippians 1:12](#), [Psalm 73:23](#), [Psalm 73:26](#)

Discuss Todd's statement that it's how we handle adversity, not prosperity, that earns us respect from non-believers. Would you agree that Christians often think that they have to have it "all together" in order to be a good witness to the world? Share some of your experiences in witnessing to others.

Conclusion: We can use our pain to know Christ, love Christ, grow in Christ, serve Christ, and share Christ.

Can you see how these 5 ways of using our pain can correspond to Todd's 5 points?