

Does God turn bitterness into joy?

Super Saturday Jesus Rally
April 11, 2015

Agenda

1. Record the call
2. Introductions
3. Songs -
 - a. Good to me
 - b. The Solid Rock
 - c. What a Friend We Have in Jesus
4. Prayer
5. Welcome
 - a. Who I am and what is the Bible Team (see previous call)
6. Study - **Does God turn bitterness into joy?**
 - a. **Discussion of the topic**
 - i. **How do people become bitter?**
 1. **death, lousy parents, rape, things not working out as planned, great loss, failure, poor decisions, sickness**
 - b. **Bitterness comes as a result of placing too much faith in people, things or circumstances and not giving their cares and anger to God.**
 - c. **Bitterness, anger, and hate puts a restriction on love**

Key examples:

Ruth

Ruth 1

In the days when the judges ruled in Israel, a severe famine came upon the land. So a man from Bethlehem in Judah left his home and went to live in the country of Moab, taking his wife and two sons with him. ²The man's name was Elimelech, and his wife was Naomi. Their two sons were Mahlon and Kilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in the land of Judah. And when they reached Moab, they settled there.

³Then Elimelech died, and Naomi was left with her two sons. ⁴The two sons married Moabite women. One married a woman named Orpah, and the other a woman named Ruth. But about ten years later, ⁵both Mahlon and Kilion died. This left Naomi alone, without her two sons or her husband.

⁶Then Naomi heard in Moab that the LORD had blessed his people in Judah by giving them good crops again. So Naomi and her daughters-in-law got ready to leave Moab to return to her homeland. ⁷With her two daughters-in-law she set out from the place where she had been living, and they took the road that would lead them back to Judah. ⁸But on the way, Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go back to your mothers' homes. And may the LORD reward you for your kindness to your husbands and to me. ⁹May the LORD bless you with the security of another marriage." Then she kissed them good-bye, and they all broke down and wept.

¹⁰"No," they said. "We want to go with you to your people."

11 But Naomi replied, "Why should you go on with me? Can I still give birth to other sons who could grow up to be your husbands? 12 No, my daughters, return to your parents' homes, for I am too old to marry again. And even if it were possible, and I were to get married tonight and bear sons, then what? 13 Would you wait for them to grow up and refuse to marry someone else? No, of course not, my daughters! Things are far more bitter for me than for you, because the LORD himself has raised his fist against me."

14 And again they wept together, and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law good-bye. But Ruth clung tightly to Naomi. 15 "Look," Naomi said to her, "your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods. You should do the same."

16 But Ruth replied, "Don't ask me to leave you and turn back. Wherever you go, I will go; wherever you live, I will live. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God. 17 Wherever you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD punish me severely if I allow anything but death to separate us!" 18 When Naomi saw that Ruth was determined to go with her, she said nothing more.

19 So the two of them continued on their journey. When they came to Bethlehem, the entire town was excited by their arrival. "Is it really Naomi?" the women asked.

20 "Don't call me Naomi," she responded. "Instead, call me Mara, for the Almighty has made life very bitter for me. 21 I went away full, but the LORD has brought me home empty. Why call me Naomi when the LORD has caused me to suffer and the Almighty has sent such tragedy upon me?"

22 So Naomi returned from Moab, accompanied by her daughter-in-law Ruth, the young Moabite woman. They arrived in Bethlehem in late spring, at the beginning of the barley harvest.

Ruth 4

13 So Boaz took Ruth into his home, and she became his wife. When he slept with her, the LORD enabled her to become pregnant, and she gave birth to a son. 14 Then the women of the town said to Naomi, "Praise the LORD, who has now provided a redeemer for your family! May this child be famous in Israel. 15 May he restore your youth and care for you in your old age. For he is the son of your daughter-in-law who loves you and has been better to you than seven sons!"

16 Naomi took the baby and cuddled him to her breast. And she cared for him as if he were her own. 17 The neighbor women said, "Now at last Naomi has a son again!" And they named him Obed. He became the father of Jesse and the grandfather of David.

Hannah

1 Samuel 1

There was a man named Elkanah who lived in Ramah in the region of Zuphin the hill country of Ephraim. He was the son of Jeroham, son of Elihu, son of Tohu, son of Zuph, of Ephraim. 2 Elkanah had two wives, Hannah and Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah did not.

3 Each year Elkanah would travel to Shiloh to worship and sacrifice to the LORD of Heaven's Armies at the Tabernacle. The priests of the LORD at that time were the two sons of Eli—Hophni and Phinehas. 4 On the days Elkanah presented his sacrifice, he would give portions of the meat to Peninnah and each of her children. 5 And though he loved Hannah, he would give her only one choice portion because the LORD had given her no children. 6 So Peninnah would taunt Hannah and make fun of her because the LORD had kept her from having children. 7 Year after year it was the same—Peninnah would taunt Hannah as they went to the Tabernacle. Each time, Hannah would be reduced to tears and would not even eat.

8 “Why are you crying, Hannah?” Elkanah would ask. “Why aren’t you eating? Why be downhearted just because you have no children? You have me—isn’t that better than having ten sons?”

9 Once after a sacrificial meal at Shiloh, Hannah got up and went to pray. Eli the priest was sitting at his customary place beside the entrance of the Tabernacle. 10 Hannah was in deep anguish, crying bitterly as she prayed to the LORD. 11 And she made this vow: “O LORD of Heaven’s Armies, if you will look upon my sorrow and answer my prayer and give me a son, then I will give him back to you. He will be yours for his entire lifetime, and as a sign that he has been dedicated to the LORD, his hair will never be cut.”

12 As she was praying to the LORD, Eli watched her. 13 Seeing her lips moving but hearing no sound, he thought she had been drinking. 14 “Must you come here drunk?” he demanded. “Throw away your wine!”

15 “Oh no, sir!” she replied. “I haven’t been drinking wine or anything stronger. But I am very discouraged, and I was pouring out my heart to the LORD. 16 Don’t think I am a wicked woman! For I have been praying out of great anguish and sorrow.”

17 “In that case,” Eli said, “go in peace! May the God of Israel grant the request you have asked of him.”

18 “Oh, thank you, sir!” she exclaimed. Then she went back and began to eat again, and she was no longer sad.

19 The entire family got up early the next morning and went to worship the LORD once more. Then they returned home to Ramah. When Elkanah slept with Hannah, the LORD remembered her plea, 20 and in due time she gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, for she said, “I asked the LORD for him.”

21 The next year Elkanah and his family went on their annual trip to offer a sacrifice to the LORD and to keep his vow. 22 But Hannah did not go. She told her husband, “Wait until the boy is weaned. Then I will take him to the Tabernacle and leave him there with the LORD permanently.”

23 “Whatever you think is best,” Elkanah agreed. “Stay here for now, and may the LORD help you keep your promise.” So she stayed home and nursed the boy until he was weaned.

24 When the child was weaned, Hannah took him to the Tabernacle in Shiloh. They brought along a three-year-old bull for the sacrifice and a basket of flour and some wine.

25 After sacrificing the bull, they brought the boy to Eli. 26 “Sir, do you remember me?” Hannah asked. “I am the very woman who stood here several years ago praying to the LORD. 27 I asked the LORD to give me this boy, and he has granted my request. 28 Now I am giving him to the LORD, and he will belong to the LORD his whole life.” And they worshiped the LORD there.

2 Then Hannah prayed:

“My heart rejoices in the Lord!

The Lord has made me strong.

Now I have an answer for my enemies;

I rejoice because you rescued me.

Job 3

At last Job spoke, and he cursed the day of his birth. 2 He said:

3 “Let the day of my birth be erased,
and the night I was conceived.

- 4 Let that day be turned to darkness.
Let it be lost even to God on high,
and let no light shine on it.
- 5 Let the darkness and utter gloom claim that day for its own.
Let a black cloud overshadow it,
and let the darkness terrify it.
- 6 Let that night be blotted off the calendar,
never again to be counted among the days of the year,
never again to appear among the months.
- 7 Let that night be childless.
Let it have no joy.
- 8 Let those who are experts at cursing—
whose cursing could rouse Leviathan—
curse that day.
- 9 Let its morning stars remain dark.
Let it hope for light, but in vain;
may it never see the morning light.
- 10 Curse that day for failing to shut my mother's womb,
for letting me be born to see all this trouble.
- 11 "Why wasn't I born dead?
Why didn't I die as I came from the womb?
- 12 Why was I laid on my mother's lap?
Why did she nurse me at her breasts?
- 13 Had I died at birth, I would now be at peace.
I would be asleep and at rest.
- 14 I would rest with the world's kings and prime ministers,
whose great buildings now lie in ruins.
- 15 I would rest with princes, rich in gold,
whose palaces were filled with silver.
- 16 Why wasn't I buried like a stillborn child,
like a baby who never lives to see the light?
- 17 For in death the wicked cause no trouble,
and the weary are at rest.
- 18 Even captives are at ease in death,
with no guards to curse them.
- 19 Rich and poor are both there,
and the slave is free from his master.
- 20 "Oh, why give light to those in misery,
and life to those who are bitter?
- 21 They long for death, and it won't come.
They search for death more eagerly than for hidden treasure.
- 22 They're filled with joy when they finally die,
and rejoice when they find the grave.
- 23 Why is life given to those with no future,
those God has surrounded with difficulties?
- 24 I cannot eat for sighing;
my groans pour out like water.
- 25 What I always feared has happened to me.

What I dreaded has come true.
26 I have no peace, no quietness.
I have no rest; only trouble comes.”

AFTER

Job 42

Then Job replied to the Lord:
2 “I know that you can do anything,
and no one can stop you.
3 You asked, ‘Who is this that questions my wisdom with such ignorance?’
It is I—and I was talking about things I knew nothing about,
things far too wonderful for me.
4 You said, ‘Listen and I will speak!
I have some questions for you,
and you must answer them.’
5 I had only heard about you before,
but now I have seen you with my own eyes.
6 I take back everything I said,

and I sit in dust and ashes to show my repentance.”

7 After the LORD had finished speaking to Job, he said to Eliphaz the Temanite: “I am angry with you and your two friends, for you have not spoken accurately about me, as my servant Job has. 8 So take seven bulls and seven rams and go to my servant Job and offer a burnt offering for yourselves. My servant Job will pray for you, and I will accept his prayer on your behalf. I will not treat you as you deserve, for you have not spoken accurately about me, as my servant Job has.” 9 So Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite did as the LORD commanded them, and the LORD accepted Job’s prayer.

10 When Job prayed for his friends, the LORD restored his fortunes. In fact, the LORD gave him twice as much as before! 11 Then all his brothers, sisters, and former friends came and feasted with him in his home. And they consoled him and comforted him because of all the trials the LORD had brought against him. And each of them brought him a gift of money and a gold ring.

12 So the LORD blessed Job in the second half of his life even more than in the beginning. For now he had 14,000 sheep, 6,000 camels, 1,000 teams of oxen, and 1,000 female donkeys. 13 He also gave Job seven more sons and three more daughters. 14 He named his first daughter Jemimah, the second Keziah, and the third Keren-happuch. 15 In all the land no women were as lovely as the daughters of Job. And their father put them into his will along with their brothers.

16 Job lived 140 years after that, living to see four generations of his children and grandchildren. 17 Then he died, an old man who had lived a long, full life.

Habakkuk

1 This is the message that the prophet Habakkuk received in a vision.

2 How long, O Lord, must I call for help?

But you do not listen!

“Violence is everywhere!” I cry,
but you do not come to save.

3 Must I forever see these evil deeds?

Why must I watch all this misery?
Wherever I look,
I see destruction and violence.
I am surrounded by people
who love to argue and fight.
4 The law has become paralyzed,
and there is no justice in the courts.
The wicked far outnumber the righteous,
so that justice has become perverted.

12 O LORD my God, my Holy One, you who are eternal—
surely you do not plan to wipe us out?
O LORD, our Rock, you have sent these Babylonians to correct us,
to punish us for our many sins.
13 But you are pure and cannot stand the sight of evil.
Will you wink at their treachery?
Should you be silent while the wicked
swallow up people more righteous than they?
14 Are we only fish to be caught and killed?
Are we only sea creatures that have no leader?
15 Must we be strung up on their hooks
and caught in their nets while they rejoice and celebrate?
16 Then they will worship their nets
and burn incense in front of them.
“These nets are the gods who have made us rich!”
they will claim.
17 Will you let them get away with this forever?
Will they succeed forever in their heartless conquests?

AFTER

3 This prayer was sung by the prophet Habakkuk:
2 I have heard all about you, Lord.
I am filled with awe by your amazing works.
In this time of our deep need,
help us again as you did in years gone by.
And in your anger,
remember your mercy.
3 I see God moving across the deserts from Edom,
the Holy One coming from Mount Paran.
His brilliant splendor fills the heavens,
and the earth is filled with his praise.
4 His coming is as brilliant as the sunrise.
Rays of light flash from his hands,
where his awesome power is hidden.
5 Pestilence marches before him;
plague follows close behind.
6 When he stops, the earth shakes.
When he looks, the nations tremble.
He shatters the everlasting mountains

and levels the eternal hills.
He is the Eternal One!

7 I see the people of Cushan in distress,
and the nation of Midian trembling in terror.

8 Was it in anger, Lord, that you struck the rivers
and parted the sea?
Were you displeased with them?
No, you were sending your chariots of salvation!

9 You brandished your bow
and your quiver of arrows.
You split open the earth with flowing rivers.

10 The mountains watched and trembled.
Onward swept the raging waters.
The mighty deep cried out,
lifting its hands in submission.

11 The sun and moon stood still in the sky
as your brilliant arrows flew
and your glittering spear flashed.

12 You marched across the land in anger
and trampled the nations in your fury.

13 You went out to rescue your chosen people,
to save your anointed ones.
You crushed the heads of the wicked
and stripped their bones from head to toe.

14 With his own weapons,
you destroyed the chief of those
who rushed out like a whirlwind,
thinking Israel would be easy prey.

15 You trampled the sea with your horses,
and the mighty waters piled high.

16 I trembled inside when I heard this;
my lips quivered with fear.
My legs gave way beneath me,
and I shook in terror.

I will wait quietly for the coming day
when disaster will strike the people who invade us.

17 Even though the fig trees have no blossoms,
and there are no grapes on the vines;
even though the olive crop fails,
and the fields lie empty and barren;
even though the flocks die in the fields,
and the cattle barns are empty,
18 yet I will rejoice in the Lord!
I will be joyful in the God of my salvation!

19 The Sovereign Lord is my strength!
He makes me as surefooted as a deer,
able to tread upon the heights.

Bleeding woman

Mark 5

24 Jesus went with him, and all the people followed, crowding around him. 25 A woman in the crowd had suffered for twelve years with constant bleeding. 26 She had suffered a great deal from many doctors, and over the years she had spent everything she had to pay them, but she had gotten no better. In fact, she had gotten worse. 27 She had heard about Jesus, so she came up behind him through the crowd and touched his robe. 28 For she thought to herself, "If I can just touch his robe, I will be healed." 29 Immediately the bleeding stopped, and she could feel in her body that she had been healed of her terrible condition.

30 Jesus realized at once that healing power had gone out from him, so he turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched my robe?"

31 His disciples said to him, "Look at this crowd pressing around you. How can you ask, 'Who touched me?'"

32 But he kept on looking around to see who had done it. 33 Then the frightened woman, trembling at the realization of what had happened to her, came and fell to her knees in front of him and told him what she had done. 34 And he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace. Your suffering is over."

Peter

John 18

Luke 22:54-62

54 So they arrested him and led him to the high priest's home. And Peter followed at a distance. 55 The guards lit a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat around it, and Peter joined them there. 56 A servant girl noticed him in the firelight and began staring at him. Finally she said, "This man was one of Jesus' followers!"

57 But Peter denied it. "Woman," he said, "I don't even know him!"

58 After a while someone else looked at him and said, "You must be one of them!" "No, man, I'm not!" Peter retorted.

59 About an hour later someone else insisted, "This must be one of them, because he is a Galilean, too."

60 But Peter said, "Man, I don't know what you are talking about." And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed.

61 At that moment the Lord turned and looked at Peter. Suddenly, the Lord's words flashed through Peter's mind: "Before the rooster crows tomorrow morning, you will deny three times that you even know me." 62 And Peter left the courtyard, weeping bitterly.

John 21

15 After breakfast Jesus asked Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?"

"Yes, Lord," Peter replied, "you know I love you."

"Then feed my lambs," Jesus told him.

16 Jesus repeated the question: "Simon son of John, do you love me?"

"Yes, Lord," Peter said, "you know I love you."

"Then take care of my sheep," Jesus said.

17 A third time he asked him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?"

Peter was hurt that Jesus asked the question a third time. He said, "Lord, you know everything. You know that I love you."

Jesus said, "Then feed my sheep."

18 "I tell you the truth, when you were young, you were able to do as you liked; you dressed yourself and went wherever you wanted to go. But when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and others will dress you and take you where you don't want to go." 19 Jesus said this to let him know by what kind of death he would glorify God. Then Jesus told him, "Follow me."

Matthew 11

28 Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light."

Psalms 55:22

22 Give your burdens to the LORD,
and he will take care of you.

He will not permit the godly to slip and fall.

1 Peter 5:7

7 Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you.

Philippians 4

4 Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again—rejoice! 5 Let everyone see that you are considerate in all you do. Remember, the Lord is coming soon.

6 Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. 7 Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

8 And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. 9 Keep putting into practice all you learned and received from me—everything you heard from me and saw me doing. Then the God of peace will be with you.