

Genesis 35 – Dealing with Loss

August 23, 2020 Discussion Notes

Everyone is encouraged to bring a Bible

(Phone apps are good for reading together in the same translation. Study Bibles give help with interpretation.)



DEALING WITH LOSS

- TAKE TIME TO GRIEVE
- FIND YOURSELF IN GOD
- SET UP MEMORIALS
- EMBRACE THE UPPER STORY
- KEEP MOVING FORWARD



Questions:

1. What loss have you experienced this year that has been difficult? Take some time to share with your group.
2. What do you remember about the sermon (review the main points above)? Did anything impact or challenge you? Do you have any questions?
3. Read 1 Samuel 15:26-28 (King Saul has once again disobeyed the Lord. Samuel, the spiritual leader of Israel, has some devastating words for him)
 - a) Why do you think obedience to God's word is so crucial? (see 1 Samuel 25:22-23)
 - b) Why do you think the penalty for Saul was so steep? (see James 3:1 – Even though this verse applies to teachers, it reveals a principle about this in leadership)
 - c) Now read 1 Samuel 15:35. Why do you think Samuel was mourning for Saul?
 - d) What does it mean that God regretted making Saul king? Didn't God know ahead of time what would happen?
 - e) Now read 1 Samuel 15:29. Here, the same Hebrew word for regret is used as in v. 35 (also in 1 Samuel 15:11). How can we reconcile vv. 11, 29, and 35? Is it possible for God to somehow have regret in one sense but not in another? Can we experience this as well?
 - f) Now read 1 Samuel 16:1. Who was the son of Jesse that would be anointed king to replace Saul? What might this verse tell us about grief and dealing with loss?
4. Read John 11:1-45
 - a) Put yourself in Mary and Martha's shoes. What must they have been experiencing?
 - b) Why were they feeling hurt by Jesus?
 - c) What assurance did Jesus give to Martha? How does this give hope to all of us?
 - d) Why do you think that Jesus delayed going to Bethany (v. 6) when he could have gone sooner and healed Lazarus?
5. Read John 11:1-45.
 - a) Why do you think Jesus delayed going to Bethany when he could have healed Lazarus?
 - b) What might this tell you about the losses that God sometimes allows in our lives?
 - c) Put yourself in Mary's and Martha's shoes. What was the "lower story" they were experiencing?
 - d) Why do you think that Jesus wept even though he knew that he would raise Lazarus?
 - e) What was the "upper story" God was writing? (see vv. 14-15 and v. 45).
 - f) Now read John 11:46-53. What was and even greater "upper story" God was writing?
6. What "lower story" in your life has you discouraged? Is there possibly an "upper story" that you don't see or understand yet? Can you think of any possibilities of what it might be?
7. Spend some time praying over the losses you have experienced. Ask God to give you eyes to see the upper story that He is writing. And pray for any specific needs in your group.