

Saturday & Sunday, November 25 & 26, 2017 - "The Uninvited Companion" - An Interview with Scott Shaum

Key Passages: 2 Corinthians 1

- Feel free to read the passage(s) out loud as a group
- Allow the group to share freely about what stood out to them from the passage or from Sunday's message

Main Ideas

- 2 Corinthians 1: Paul wrote it later in his ministry and really wanted to qualify his calling by showing how God has used suffering to grow him
- Scott Shaum works for Barnabas International to pastor and care for workers for the gospel abroad
- Scott contracted Dengue Fever in Cambodia
  - He and his wife Beth went back to Cambodia and he got sick again
  - There was about 1 year of symptoms and sickness → no medical answers → fear and anxiety
  - "It felt like the Lord ran off some place" - Scott Shaum
  - Ultimately it plays out like Chronic Fatigue Syndrome and Scott still deals with the sickness and symptoms today
- The Uninvited Companion
  - We don't like or want conflict in our lives
  - There is a PARADOX → A Loving Almighty God AND difficult and painful things
  - We do all sorts of things to try and "fix" it or to solve our own problems
- A Biblical understanding of suffering
  - 2 Corinthians 1: Comfort and Affliction are the 2 themes
  - In this specific case wall was delivered from affliction but in the case of the "thorn in the flesh" he was not
  - We have to have a Biblical reading of tension/conflict/suffering
  - When we suffer we either move TOWARD God OR AWAY from God
- Suffering → Maturity
  - Scott said, "We need suffering." We don't need endurance with the Lord when life is going well
  - Does God still heal? → Absolutely yes
    - Approach God with faith but not holding Him hostage with our requests
    - God has wisdom for our lives that we don't understand
- We get in trouble when we ask why?
  - When we get stuck there → fear & doubt
  - We're after an explanation but instead we should ask HOW?
    - How should I respond?
    - This invites us into relationship with God and others
- Practical steps when facing grief/suffering
  - Play. Recess. Do something fun
  - Step into community: Build community now for those times, don't be embarrassed/ashamed
  - Be in the Word: Not punishment but opportunity, Jesus is moving toward us and calling us to step to Him
- We become carriers of comfort: **stewards of the reality of the risen Jesus Christ.** God comforts me → I comfort others
- "We often want God for what he can do for us - not God himself" - Scott Shaum
- We can walk through difficult things and the Lord is WITH US

Questions (Feel free to use all of these, some of these, or none of these)

1. What has God taught you through waling through suffering or grief with Him?
2. Do you agree with Scott when he says we need suffering? Why or why not?
3. Think about the times God has grown you the most. What were the trials or difficulties he was using at the time?
4. Which of Scott's three practical steps (play/recess, step into community, be in the Word) for dealing with suffering do you need to grow the most?
5. How is God calling you to grow your community for times where you are suffering?
6. When was a time that God used you or someone else to be a "steward of the reality of the risen Jesus Christ"?
7. What is God inviting you into as a result of this passage or message?

**\*\*15 Minutes with God Reading Plan-**

**Mon: Mark 8 Tues: Mark 9 Wed: Mark 10 Thurs: Mark 11 Fri: Mark 12**