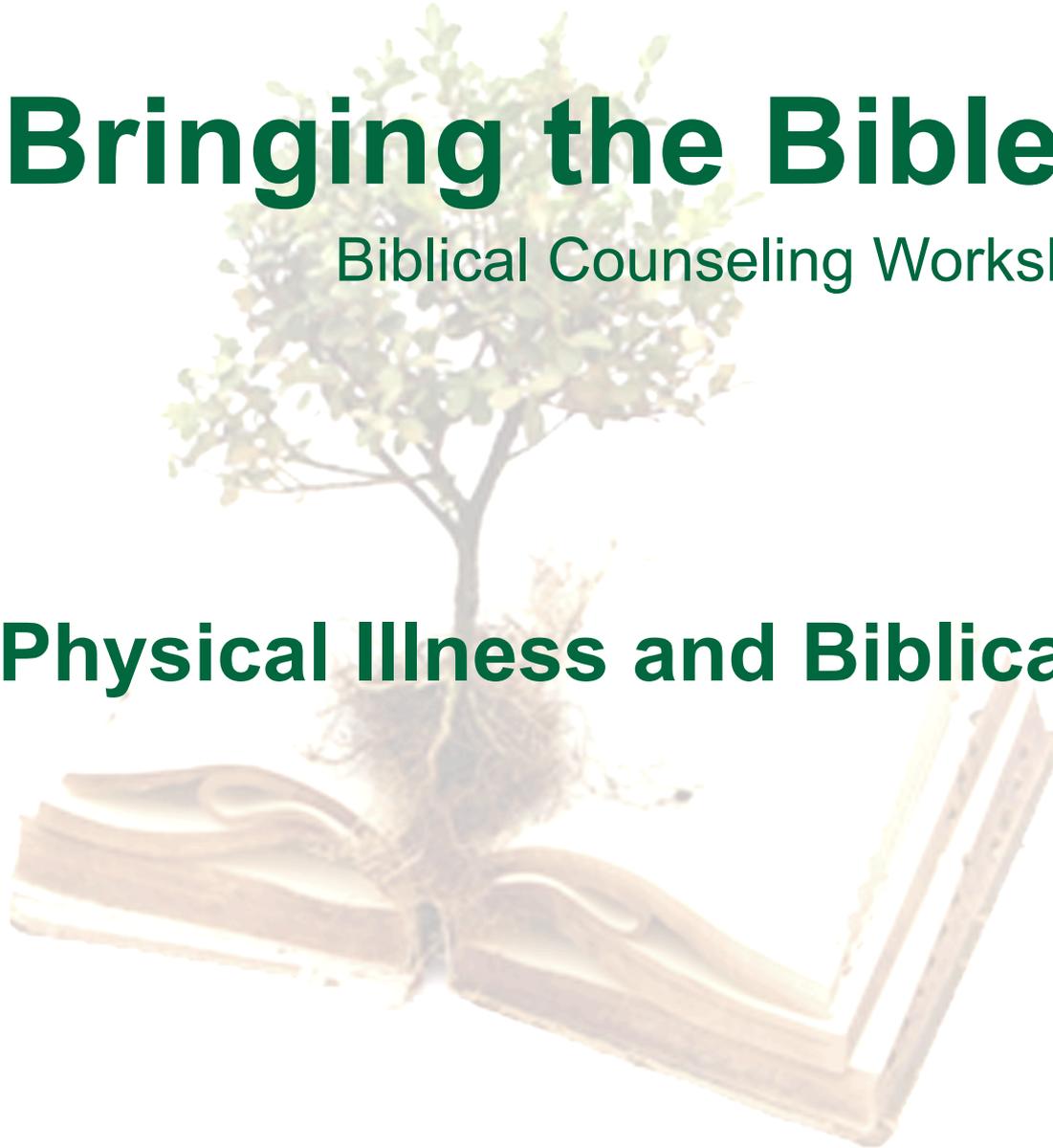


Bringing the Bible to Life

Biblical Counseling Workshops

Physical Illness and Biblical Counseling

Track II.11





Worldly Theology - The Cause of Pain & Suffering is...

- **Someone else' s fault. (Adam)**
- **God' s fault.**
- **Satan' s Fault**
- **No one' s fault.**
- **My fault, “God' s punishing me”**
- **Result of evolution**



Actual Causes of Suffering/Pain

- Original Sin
- Other's sins against us
- Satan's devices



Actual Causes of Suffering/Pain

- Personal Sin - James 5:15,16; Prov.13:15
- God may use pain and suffering to punish sin - Ex.15:26
- Suffering may be a result of sinful responses to life- problems (complicating problem)



Biblical Theology - God's Purposes in Pain & Suffering...

²² What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, ²³in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory—

(Romans 9:22-23)



Biblical Theology - God's Purposes in Pain & Suffering...

- To display God's glory as He redeems sin & its consequences
- “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”³ Jesus answered, “It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but **that the works of God might be displayed in him.** John 9:2b-3



Biblical Theology - God's Purposes in Pain & Suffering...

- ***Displays His Grace & Mercy*** “... let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. (Matt. 5:16 ESV), also 2 Cor.12:9-10
- For it is all for your sake, so that **as grace extends** to more and more people **it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.** (2 Cor. 4:15 ESV)
- Many don't get what's deserved, because of His mercy. (Rom.6:23)



Purposes in Pain & Suffering...For Our GOOD. (Rom.8:28-29)

- Blesses the sufferer because they are a vessel bringing Glory to God - 2 Cor.2:14-17; 4:10-18
- Makes a person more like Christ - Ja 1 2-43; Job. 1:8-12; 2:3-6.
- Marks of God's love - Discipline - Rom.12:1-14
- God may use pain and suffering to produce repentance - Num. 21:5-7; 1 Cor. 5:5



Purposes in Pain & Suffering...For Our GOOD. (Rom.8:28-29)

- Enhances personal ministry - Job 2:10; Luke 23:34,39-43; Jn.19:11,25-27,30; Phil. 1:12-18.
- Prevents sin through warning & natural motivation -
- Reminds us of our eternal destiny, through the fragility of life – Ja. 4:13; Job 7:9; 1 Pet. 1:24; Psa. 102:11; 39:5;



Suffering is to be Expected

- I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33 ESV)
- 2 Tim. 3:12; 1 Pet. 2:20; 4:13,14; 5:10.



Knowing that Suffering is Inevitable...

- we're less inclined to be shocked 1 Pet. 1:3-8; 2:12-25; 4:1-12
- we're less inclined to denial - the Lord gives & takes away
- we're less inclined to be angry - doest thou well to be angry
- we're less inclined to bargain with God - Gideon
- we're less inclined to become depressed and shut down - Elijah



Fundamental Principles re: Illness

- You don't need to be a physician to help (2Cor. 1:3-11; Rom. 15:14)
- ⁵Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God, ⁶who has made us competent to be ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. (2 Cor. 3:5-6)
- Listen and pay attention to the counselee.
- Physical illnesses are defined by physical evidence of damage



Your Responsibility – Your Heart

- Accept the diagnosis and symptoms as a given.
- Do not try to prove or disprove the diagnosis.
- Do not practice medicine or recommend other possible diagnoses or methods of diagnosis?
- Do not recommend medications, *this should be for medical professionals ONLY.*
- Encourage the counselee to follow basic principles of good health.



Your Responsibility – Their Heart

- Changing **(or reinforcing)** Perspective
- Embracing God's Purposes
- Learning lessons from the trial
- Responding in ways that **please & glorify God**
- (Rom. 8:29; Col.1:28; Ja.1:2-4; 1 Pet.4:12)
- (Track III unpacks this in detail)



Pointing to God's Provisions

- **Hope** (Rom.15:4,13; **1Tim.1:1; Heb. 4:12-16**)
- **Comfort** - God's love and promises and purposes (2Cor. 1:3-11; 2 Cor. 1:20)
- **Worshipping, Praise, Thanksgiving, serving others, Prayer** (Phil.4:4-9,13,19; Eph. 5:20)
- “Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head and fell on the ground and worshiped. (Job 1:20)



Obedience in Spite of Suffering

(Rom. 8:35-37; Phil. 4:11,12)

- Not *controlled* by the agony of pain and suffering.
- Not *controlled* by the constant pursuit of relief from pain and suffering.
- God expects obedience in the midst of the agony of the illness — (1 Cor. 15:57; Rom. 8:35-37)
- Controlled by the purposes & Holy Spirit of God.



But what about His/Her Illness?

- Think biblically- 2 Cor. 10:5; Phil. 4:8.
- God will not exceed your ability to handle the difficulties of the illness - 1 Cor. 10:13; Phil. 4:13.
- God's grace is available and sufficient - 2 Cor. 12:9,10; 9:8; 1 Cor. 10:13
- Job honored God in suffering, so can you - Job 1:1 to 2:10.
- Paul struggled with his desire to go to heaven or to stay and minister. Phil. 1:23-25



But what about His/Her Illness?

- How the disease was diagnosed?
- Learn the natural history of the condition.
- How has the condition effected the person's lifestyle?
- How has the condition effected the person's thinking/attitudes?
- How has the **diagnosis** effected the person's thinking/attitudes?



How Are They Responding?

- How has the treatment effected the person?
- What are the complications of treatment?



Terminal Illnesses

- Even with a terminal illness God doesn't stop your ministries, but is simply changing the dynamics of them.
- Ministering to dying people - keep them informed of what will happen as they die.
- This illness is to be the vehicle that God will use to bring you to Himself in heaven.
- Other than sudden death or the rapture every person will die as a result of some illness.



Eternal Glorification Removes Sting of Death

- ⁵⁴When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.” ⁵⁵“O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?” (1 Cor. 15:54-55)
- Rev. 21:3,4; 22:1-5
- ***Death is the final battle in a victory already achieved!***



Homework

- Summarize your main take-aways from this session, especially noting any areas that were either unclear to you or that you might disagree.



Going Deeper

- Psalm 119:64-71
- Audio Message: John Piper, Why Was this Man Born Blind?
- Audio Message: John Piper, Ten Aspects of God's Sovereignty Over Suffering and Satan's Hand in It



Next Classes

II.12 *Medicine and Biblical Counseling*,
Kent Kloter

Bringing the Bible to Life

Biblical Counseling Workshops



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