

THE PROBLEM AND POWER OF PAIN

WEEK 2 • DAILY BRIEFING 3 • WHY THEM?

WEEKLY MEMORY VERSE

Romans 8:18

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

This week follows Sunday's sermon, "A War Without Answers," from the book of Job. You can watch or listen to the sermon at 1mso.church or on the One Missoula app.

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, I do not understand why You heal some people and not others. Maybe my friends and family need to see resilience while another person's friends and family need to see a miracle. But even then I am only guessing. Help me trust You with the decisions and actions You have not explained. Thank You that You see what I cannot see. Make Your presence undeniable in my life while I wait for answers. In Jesus' name I pray, amen.

TODAY'S TEACHING

On Sunday we saw that when God finally answered Job, He did not explain Job's suffering or clear up the mystery. Instead, He asked Job question after question, starting with, "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?" (Job 38:4). That was the second principle from Sunday: we lack the capacity to understand everything that is going on. Even when walking through hurting and desperate crowds, Jesus healed some people and not others, and He never explained why. Not knowing why does not mean you are dumb; it means you are finite.

Most people do not wrestle with this in the abstract. They wrestle with it when someone else gets the answer they have been praying for. A coworker's scan comes back clean, and yours does not. A couple in your LifeGroup gets pregnant with ease, and you have been praying for five years. Someone else's son comes back to church, and yours still will not return your calls. The question underneath all of it is the same: "Why them and not me?" That is an understandable question. But if it sits unanswered long enough, it can harden into the belief that God is unfair or that He loves others and not you. Tomorrow we will look at how to care for someone else who is hurting. Today is about the questions you are carrying yourself.

The Bible is honest that God does not explain everything He does. God told the prophet Isaiah, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD" (Isaiah 55:8). God sees every person and every moment at once, and He is working on a global and eternal scale. You and I see our own situation from the inside, one moment at a time. That gap is not a flaw in your faith. It is the difference between the Creator and the created.

Today's first passage takes place in Jerusalem at a pool called Bethesda. The pool was surrounded by covered porches, and John says that in them "lay a multitude of invalids" (John 5:3). Many people believed that when the water was stirred up, the first person into the pool would be healed. Archaeologists have uncovered the remains of a large pool complex in Jerusalem that matches John's description.

The second passage comes from Luke. Jesus was on His way to the home of a synagogue leader whose daughter, about twelve years old, was dying (Luke 8:41–42), and the crowd was pressing in on Him from every side. A woman in that crowd had been bleeding for twelve years. Under Jewish law, that kind of bleeding made her ceremonially unclean, which meant she was barred from worship at the temple and anyone who

touched her would become unclean too (Leviticus 15:19, 25, 31). For twelve years her sickness had kept her broke and at a distance from other people.

READ & MEDITATE

John 5:5–9a

One man was there who had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. ⁶When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had already been there a long time, he said to him, “Do you want to be healed?” ⁷The sick man answered him, “Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, and while I am going another steps down before me.” ⁸Jesus said to him, “Get up, take up your bed, and walk.” ⁹And at once the man was healed, and he took up his bed and walked.

Luke 8:43–48

And there was a woman who had had a discharge of blood for twelve years, and though she had spent all her living on physicians, she could not be healed by anyone. ⁴⁴She came up behind him and touched the fringe of his garment, and immediately her discharge of blood ceased. ⁴⁵And Jesus said, “Who was it that touched me?” When all denied it, Peter said, “Master, the crowds surround you and are pressing in on you!” ⁴⁶But Jesus said, “Someone touched me, for I perceive that power has gone out from me.” ⁴⁷And when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling, and falling down before him declared in the presence of all the people why she had touched him, and how she had been immediately healed. ⁴⁸And he said to her, “Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace.”

Deuteronomy 29:29

The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.

As you read, compare the two people Jesus healed. Pay attention to what each of them did before Jesus healed them.

REFLECT

Answer these honestly. This is between you and God, and nobody else needs to see what you write.

Jesus walked into a place full of sick people and spoke to one man.

1. Fill in the blank from John 5:6: “Do you want to be _____?”

Read the man’s answer in verse 7. Did he answer Jesus’ question? What does his answer tell you about where his hope was before he encountered Jesus?

He never said yes, and he never asked Jesus for anything. His hope was in getting to the water first. A few verses later, John tells us the man did not even know who had healed him (John 5:13).

The woman in Luke 8 had already spent everything she had trying to get well.

2. Fill in the blank from Luke 8:48: “Daughter, your _____ has made you well; go in peace.”

What did the woman do that the man at the pool did not do?

Jesus healed one person who reached out to Him in faith and one person who did not know His name. Faith matters to God, but the Bible never teaches that enough faith guarantees healing. Faith is not a formula to get dialed in, no matter what health-and-wealth preachers say. You see the same thing in Paul's ministry. On the island of Malta, Paul prayed for a man with a fever, and afterward "the rest of the people on the island who had diseases also came and were cured" (Acts 28:9). Yet Paul told Timothy, a young pastor he had trained, to "use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments" (1 Timothy 5:23), and he wrote, "I left Trophimus, who was ill, at Miletus" (2 Timothy 4:20). The Bible never explains why God healed a whole island through Paul and then left one of Paul's own ministry partners sick. We simply do not know, and God has not told us.

Moses spoke the words of Deuteronomy 29:29 to Israel just before they entered the land God had promised them.

3. Fill in the blank from Deuteronomy 29:29: "The _____ things belong to the LORD our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us."

What does this verse say about God? What does it say God has given to us?

God has not told us everything, but He has told us everything we need to obey Him today.

Most people have at least one "why them and not me?" question they keep bringing back to God.

4. What is that question for you right now?

If God gave you a complete explanation tomorrow, would the information take away the pain? Why or why not?

Unanswered questions do not have to push you away from God, but they often do when they go unspoken.

5. Where have you let an unanswered question become a reason to pull back from God or from prayer?

What would it look like to bring that question to God honestly this week and keep trusting Him while you wait?

Do some honest introspective self-assessment before moving on.

PRAYER

Write your prayer or pray out loud.

MEMORY VERSE

Write or recite Romans 8:18 from memory.
