

Looking ahead...

Next week, we will be thinking about the theme of ***“Priorities”*** while focusing mainly on Philippians 3. The people of Israel, as described in the Old Testament, struggled with living by the ‘*right priorities*’ just as we do many years later. When Jesus began His public ministry, He regularly challenged His listeners and His followers to set their life-focus on what *God’s priorities* are...rather than on their own. Our Savior asks the same of us today. We will be honestly (and prayerfully) thinking about our *priorities* as we reflect on what God’s Word has to say about this very important theme.

Readings to prepare for next week:

___DAY 1 (October 7): *Deuteronomy 30:11-20*

___DAY 2 (October 8): *Jeremiah 2:1-13*

___DAY 3 (October 9): *Matthew 6:19-24*

___DAY 4 (October 10): *Matthew 6:25-33*

___DAY 5 (October 11): *Philippians 1:12-26*

___DAY 6 (October 12): *Philippians 3:7-16*



Adversity

Week Five

During the week beginning with Sunday, October 6, we will consider the theme of ***“Adversity”*** while focusing mainly on James 1 and Hebrews 12. In these passages, as well as in many others, God offers us a completely different perspective on *adversity* than what ‘comes naturally’ to us. As Christ-followers, we are invited to move closer to God (and to others in His family) when we face *various difficulties* in our lives. We also are given the opportunity to allow our heavenly Father to use *adversity* to mold and shape us to be more like Jesus.

Making it personal...

Which observation(s) from Sunday's sermon impacted you personally (see below)?

(God actually promises us that we will experience adversity; When we face adversity, we are *offered the privilege* of our Savior drawing *close* to us; As we do 'our part' through trusting & enduring, God will use adversity to make us more like His Son; One of the main ways God shows us His *closeness* is through the *encouragement* of our brothers & sisters)

How can you personally 'apply' those in your coming week?

To what degree do you 'expect' less adversity to come into your life because you are God's child and are striving to live life His way?

As you look back on a time(s) when you have allowed God to use adversity to shape your character, what is a specific way(s) He changed you?

As you reflect on Hebrews 12:7-11, focus on how your heavenly Father uses adversity as part of His process of "*raising you*" to be a 'more mature' child.

As you think about how you are responding to *adversity* in your 3 'life circles', what might it look like to *trust God & endure* in each circle?

*In your '*family circle*':

*In your '*school/work circle*':

*In your '*community circle*':

In what specific way(s) are you inviting other brothers/sisters in God's family to walk beside you as you face adversity? What new steps will you take as you trust God in this vital area?

Think about at least one person in each of your 3 life circles who is experiencing *adversity* on some level right now. Write his/her initials down and jot down some specific ways you can come alongside and be a picture of God's closeness to them:

*In your '*family circle*':

*In your '*school/work circle*':

*In your '*community circle*':