

This morning, Dr. Hellerman shared out of Phil. 1:12-26 about “Suffering for a Purpose.” He outlined three purposes in our suffering.

- 1) It clarifies for us what God thinks really matters in life.
- 2) It actually serves to spread the gospel as Christians see their brothers and sisters suffering for Christ, and even using their situations for the gospel’s advancement (as Paul does in his Philippians prison, v. 12-15).
- 3) It fosters faith and courage as we reflect upon the truth that this, as Paul says, “will turn out for my deliverance” through the Spirit and prayers of others. All things will work together for the good of our sanctification (Rom. 8:28).

Take 15 minutes, then, and pray through the following questions:

- 1) For five (5) minutes, think back on some time of suffering you yourself experienced. In what ways was this hard? What do you remember feeling or thinking during that time? How did God deliver you, spiritually and even circumstantially? Thank the Lord for that.
- 2) Now take five (5) more minutes ask the Lord, how do you now see he used that time in your life? Did it bring some clarity to your priorities or God's will for you? Did you see how it benefited others or might still do so? Reflect on this with the Lord.
- 3) Finally, in the last five (5) minutes, think about what suffering are you experiencing now or that you may be called to (say, through some act of obedience)? Talk to the Lord about it as if to a friend. Remembering your experiences in the past, now ask God for what you need or desire for this time, knowing that he can redeem it (turn “garbage into glory” as Dr. H. said) and knowing that He is walking with you in this.