

Let it Rain; Genesis 7:11-12

I. Build a Boat

a. There is a song by Colton Dixon titled "Build a Boat"

- These words are repeated throughout the song (I'm not sure if it is the chorus)
- "And when the flood and the water starts to rise, yeah
I'll ride the storm 'cause I got You by my side
With Your wind in my sails, Your love never fails or fades
I'll build a boat, so let it rain"
- The idea is that he can stand all of life's troubles (floods, storms, rain, etc.) because he has a boat strong enough to withstand the storm

b. My mind immediately went to Noah

II. The Ark

a. Let's think about the flood

- As the rain is falling and the floods are rising, the people outside the ark are dying
- All the other animals that were not on the ark are dying
- Flood waters are not pretty, the mud and debris are rushing or floating everywhere. The stench of death (at least for the first few days) permeates the area

b. Let's think about the ark

- Two of every animal
- Seven of some clean animals
- It had to be crowded
- Noah and his family had to listen to the sounds of destruction outside the ark
- They had to listen to, and smell, the animals in the ark

c. Even though the ark provided salvation for Noah and his family, I'm sure there was a lot of suffering as well

- Noah and his family entered the ark on the 600th year, 2nd month, and 17th day of his life
- Noah exited the ark on the 601st year, 2nd month, and 27th day of his life; that is 1 year and 10 days on the ark
- All that time, he and his family were taking care of the animals
- Has anyone mucked a horse stall?
- There are only 8 people left alive on the entire earth!
- I often wonder if Moses had any friends that died in the flood

d. I wonder if Moses was saying, "let it rain"?

III. A Misunderstanding

a. Pain is real; suffering is real

- I often quote Paul, saying that we don't grieve as those who have no hope
- That does not mean that we don't feel the pain of loss
 1. How many of us cried tears of loss over the last few years?
 2. It does not matter what disease or virus took our loved ones

3. It does not matter if our loved one was ill for a while, and we knew the end was coming
 4. It does not matter if they were taken suddenly, without warning or expectation, at an age when we thought they should not have died
 5. The pain we feel, the tears that run down our faces is real!
- We still have a misunderstanding of suffering
- b. Pure Joy
- Define, in your minds, pure joy
 1. Some might say, grandchildren
 2. I have said that grandchildren are my reward for not killing my children
 3. Ron Bontrager told us a story about his kids coming over with his grandchildren and his prize pickup truck
 4. I could only imagine Jim and Susan's pure joy watching Spencer play in the Rose Bowl
 - When I think of 'pure joy' suffering is not part of it
 - James 1:2–3 (NIV84) ² Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, ³ because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance.
 - The Bible uses the idea of pure joy, not about grandkids and children, but about suffering!
 - In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus tells us about the poor, the peacemakers, and the pure in heart, but He spends more time on the persecuted and suffering
 - Matthew 5:10–12 (ESV) ¹⁰ "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ¹¹ "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.
 - Jesus does not tell us to endure the suffering and persecution, He tells us to rejoice!
 - The word "glad" is translated better in the KJV, "exceedingly glad"
 - To be exceedingly joyful, *exult, be glad, overjoyed* ¹
- c. Here is the misunderstanding
- When we find ourselves deep in the pain and trauma of suffering or persecution, what is our request of God? Take the suffering away
 - We must completely change our perspective, our understanding of suffering
 - We are referred to as soldiers, we even sing the song, "Soldiers of Christ, Arise"
 - Soldiers are equipped and trained for battle
 1. I was deployed to the middle east twice (Iraq and Kuwait)
 2. If I could have gone again, I would have
 3. Most of the soldiers (airmen) I knew wanted to deploy to these hot spots
 4. We are trained for combat and want to be sent

¹ William Arndt et al., [*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*](#) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 4.

5. Ask any special forces soldier, sailor, marine, or airmen and they will tell you that they want to go!
6. After the deployment and in their dress uniforms they wear medals and are quick to tell you about the ones that matter, Desert Storm, Iraqi Freedom, Northern and Southern Watch, etc.
7. They wear them as a badge of honor!
8. They struggled and fought for what mattered!
- The scriptures give us this very understanding of suffering
- “Do we see suffering as an opportunity, a privilege or an honor, or do we only see it as a burden” Kerry Williams
- It seems that during these times of suffering many people’s faith are tested
 1. “Faith is not faith when the times are good... Faith is really only proven and shown when it is hard.” Kerry Williams
 2. 2 Timothy 3:10–12 (ESV) ¹⁰ You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, ¹¹ my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra—which persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me. ¹² Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,
 3. Deuteronomy 8:1–2 (ESV) ¹ “The whole commandment that I command you today you shall be careful to do, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land that the LORD swore to give to your fathers. ² And you shall remember the whole way that the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not.
 4. Are you passing the test?

IV. Testing

- a. We know God does not tempt us, but we know he does test us
 - The words may seem similar, and they are, but there is a fundamental difference between them
 - To be tempted means that there is a view toward failure
 - When Satan afflicted Job, it was with a view towards failure
 - Job 1:9–11 (ESV) ⁹ Then Satan answered the LORD and said, “Does Job fear God for no reason? ¹⁰ Have you not put a hedge around him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. ¹¹ But stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and he will curse you to your face.”
 - Job 2:4–6 (ESV) ⁴ Then Satan answered the LORD and said, “Skin for skin! All that a man has he will give for his life. ⁵ But stretch out your hand and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse you to your face.” ⁶ And the LORD said to Satan, “Behold, he is in your hand; only spare his life.”
 - Twice Satan said that Job would curse God if Satan afflicted him, a view toward failure
- b. To be tested by God is with a view towards success

- Abraham was tested by God with his son, Isaac
- God told him to sacrifice his son
- Isaac was the son of the promise, the son of his old age, the recipient of the promise that all nations would be blessed through his (Abraham's) offspring
- God was not looking for failure, but for success!
- Hebrews 11:17–19 (ESV) ¹⁷ By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son, ¹⁸ of whom it was said, "Through Isaac shall your offspring be named."
¹⁹ He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back.
- I want you to notice Abraham's perspective

V. Let It Rain

- a. What is our perspective on Suffering?
- b. Is it the same as Scripture?
- c. We should be shouting, "let it rain!" because we have built a boat