

Isaiah 55:8-9

Kjv

8) For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. 9) For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts

Introduction

1. Life is full of uncertainties

- a. No one can fully chart tomorrow's events, for we have no control of tomorrow.
- b. Each day, hour, moment can change at the drop of the hat, because there are some things that we cannot control.
- c. Events which change our lives
 - i. Sickness
 - ii. Pain both physical and spiritual
 - iii. Any tragic event beyond our control which affects our finances, family, or health
 - iv. Accidents
 - v. Recessions and depressions in the financial system of our world
 - vi. Gas and food prices

Note: We plan, but as it is noted in John Steinbeck's book, Of Mice and Men,
At times the best laid plans of mice and men go awry.

d. Scriptures

- i. James 4:13-15

13) Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: 14) Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. 15) For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.

Note: Our lives are so short, so uncertain, so fragile, that we should be prepared at all times to face our God.

- ii. Psalms 103:13-16

13) Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. 14) For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust. 15) As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. 16) For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.

iii. Isaiah 40:6-9

6) The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: 7) The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. 8) The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.

iv. Job 14:1...Man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble.

v. Matthew 6:27...Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?

2. Since life is full of uncertainties,

a. Therefore, we need someone in whom we can trust...He is God

b. Therefore, we need someone who knows what will happen tomorrow...Which is God

c. Therefore, we need someone who can control our future...That will be God

d. Therefore, we need someone in whom we can abide with certainty that He has our best interests at heart...Again, that is God

3. God is the One on Whom we can Trust.

a. Proverbs 18:24b...There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.

b. Jeremiah 29:11

For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.

i. Jeremiah tells the people Jerusalem that their city will be destroyed

ii. Jeremiah tells them that they will go into Babylonian captivity for seventy years

iii. Jeremiah tells them that after seventy years they will return to their homeland

iv. Jeremiah declares from God these words

1) God says...I know the thought that I think toward you

- 2) God says...My thoughts are of peace and not evil
- 3) God says...My thoughts are to give you an expected end

v. Consider

- 1) Even after they had disobeyed God, and
- 2) Even after they had served idols, and
- 3) Even after they were scheduled for seventy years of captivity,
- 4) God still has good thoughts toward them to bring them to an expected end of peace and prosperity.

c. Listen

- i. Even after we have failed
- ii. Even after we have been scheduled for correction through adverse circumstances because of our actions and words and thoughts
- iii. God still has good thoughts toward us to bring us to an expected end of peace and prosperity in Christ
- iv. Jesus will be your friend that will stick closer than your brother if you will allow it

4. Therefore

- a. Since there are things that will happen in our lives that we do not understand
- b. Since we do not have control over ever thing that with which we deal
- c. We have to trust a Sovereign God, who we know loves us
- d. We have to trust our Sovereign God, who we know has everything in control
- e. We have to trust our Sovereign God to work out all things for our good
 - i. Because we have prayed in the Spirit with groaning which cannot be uttered
 - ii. Because we know that the Spirit is helping our infirmities by taking hold of the situation with us to carry the burden for us
 - iii. Because we know that the Spirit has interceded in direct line with the Father's will for He knows the mind of the Father

- iv. Because we love God
- v. Because we are the called according to His purpose
- vi. Because our hearts are after God, and we desire for His will to be done here on earth, in our lives, in our situation, in our family, in our church just like it is done in heaven.

I. Life happens... Which we do not understand

A. Adversity happens

1. Synonyms for adversity are

- a. Hardship
- b. Difficulty
- c. Danger
- d. Misfortune
- e. Harsh Conditions
- f. Hard times

2. Definition according to Merriam-Webster Dictionary

- a. A difficult situation or condition:
- b. Misfortune or tragedy

3. Scriptures

- a. John 16:33

These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

- i. We need to know the teachings of Christ so that in this world we can have peace
- ii. Adverse circumstances will happen, but Jesus has overcome the world, so in Christ we can have peace

Note: We may say we have peace, and we may say everything is okay, but our actions and idle words when spoken without us trying to convince someone everything is okay demonstrates the unrest, dissatisfaction, unsettledness that is in our hearts.

b. 2 Timothy 3:12...

Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

c. Peter writes about persecution in 1st Peter, and the theme of 1st Peter is suffering

i. Suffering is mentioned at least 16 times in 1 Peter

ii. Let me note a few passages to demonstrate the theme of 1st Peter.

1) 1:6--church has "been put to grief in manifold trials"

2) 2:19--members were "suffering wrongfully"

3) 3:17--They might have to "suffer for righteousness sake"

4) 4:12-16--"fiery trials" were coming, and they were not to be ashamed "if they suffered"

5) 5:9--"Christians throughout the world would be affected by afflictions"

d. James wrote about suffering

i. James 1:2...My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;

ii. James 1:3...Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

iii. James 1:4

But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

iv. James 1:12 (KJV)

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

e. Christians must bear their trials as bravely as possible for in 1 Peter 2:21 it says:
Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps

f. God does not leave us to face suffering alone, but 1 Peter 5:12 tells us that we have the
"true grace of God wherein ye stand."

i. In 1 Peter 1:2, Peter writes in the greeting, "Grace unto you..."

ii. In 1:10, he mentions that the prophets prophesied of the
"Grace that should come unto you"

- iii. In 1:10, “Grace” is the expectation of the future for the saints when Jesus is revealed.
- iv. In 2:19-20, the true grace of God is to be our pattern of conduct when we are under abuse.
- v. In 3:7, grace is the fullness of the blessings that come in answer to our prayers.
- vi. In 4:10, grace is the equipment for spiritual service
- vii. In 5:5, grace is given to those who wait on God humbly.

Note: In 2 Corinthians 12:9, Paul records that God said to Paul: “My grace is sufficient for thee;,” and I feel that if God’s grace was sufficient for Paul, His grace will be sufficient for me, for you, and whoever needs it.

B. Adversity happens...How will we respond to adversity, hardship, disappointment, tragedy

1. Comments from Charles Stanley taken from Advancing through Adversity

- a. Most People automatically ask two questions, when adversity strikes.
- b. Those two questions are
 - i. Why did this happen? (and)
 - ii. Who is responsible for this?
- c. Consciously or Subconsciously, Verbally or Silently, these two questions spring to minds and lips when adversity strikes.
- d. Stanley said that the question we should ask is:
 “How should I respond to this adversity, tragedy, hardship?”

2. Questions from If You Are The Son Of God by Julia Blum

- a. Where is God?
- b. Why does God remain silent?
- c. How could God allow all this?
- d. How could God have allowed such a thing to happen?
- e. How could He not have answered their prayers?

f. How could He abandon those who trusted in Him even in their last moments?

Note: Let me share four stories from the Bible to show that God is at work in our lives when we do not understand what is happening.

II. Four Stories of Adversity to demonstrate God is at work

A. Job

1. We know from reading the first two chapters of Job that Job had not done anything to deserve the adversity he went through

a. Job 1:1

There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil.

b. Job 1:8 where the Lord testified of Job's righteousness

And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?

c. Job 1:21-22

21) And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. 22) In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.

d. Job 2:3 where God again testified of Job's righteousness

And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause.

e. Job 2:9-10

9) Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die. 10) But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.

2. Job's friends arrived on the scene to comfort him, and they made the mistake that many of us make today which is to try and find someone or something to blame for our pain

a. When bad things happen, we should do a sin check list in our own lives, not in anybody else's life

- b. If there is sin, then repent, and if we cannot find sin in our lives, then consider it to be some type of test or trial to remove impurities out of our life and so God will receive glory as what we face impacts someone else

Note: Life for Christ is a faith walk

- i. Hebrews 11:1...

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

- ii. When we deal with things that causes us pain and hardship, the Lord is teaching us to see with eyes of faith and recognize His love at the moment when everything around us appears to be screaming the opposite. (Julia Blum)

- iii. 1 Corinthians 2:7-14

7) But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: 8) Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. 9) But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. 10) But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. 11) For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. 12) Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. 13) Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 14) But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned

- 1) The things of God are spiritually discerned
- 2) As we deal with life, we need to understand that God's ways are above our ways, and we cannot comprehend what God has in store for us who love Him
- 3) Therefore, when we deal with hardship, we need to look beyond the natural man allowing the Spirit of God to show us spiritual things that will strengthen, mature, grow us into what God wants us to be

Note: Remember, this is a faith walk.

- 2. Job demonstrated faith during this difficult time of life

- a. Job 13:15...Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him:...
- b. Job 19:

i. In verses 8-20, Job mentions the things that he feel God has done, because he does not understand what is happening, so Job cries out

1) v8... He hath fenced up my way that I cannot pass,

2) v8...He hath set darkness in my paths.

3) v9...He hath stripped me of my glory, and taken the crown from my head.

4) v10...

He hath destroyed me on every side, and I am gone: and mine hope hath he removed like a tree.

5) v11...

He hath also kindled his wrath against me, and he counteth me unto him as one of his enemies.

6) v12..

His troops come together, and raise up their way against me, and encamp round about my tabernacle.

7) v13...

He hath put my brethren far from me, and mine acquaintance are verily estranged from me.

8) v14...My kinsfolk have failed, and my familiar friends have forgotten me.

9) v15..

They that dwell in mine house, and my maids, count me for a stranger: I am an alien in their sight.

10) v16...

I called my servant, and he gave me no answer; I intreated him with my mouth.

11) v17...

My breath is strange to my wife, though I intreated for the children's sake of mine own body.

12) v18...Yea, young children despised me; I arose, and they spake against me.

13) v19...

All my inward friends abhorred me: and they whom I loved are turned against me.

14) v20...

My bone cleaveth to my skin and to my flesh, and I am escaped with the skin of my teeth.

ii. After all this, listen to Job's faith in verses 25-27

25) For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:

26) And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: 27)

Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.

c. Again, in Job 23:8-12, we read about His faith

8) Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: 9) On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him: 10) But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold. 11) My foot hath held his steps, his way have I kept, and not declined. 12) Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food.

Note: This is a faith walk

i. Things happen, but let us not do like Job's friends, try to place blame to justify what has happened, to ourselves, or to someone else.

ii. Excerpt from Searcy Living issue 3 2017 page 83-84.

1) This is a beautiful story about Ed Buckner the weatherman

2) His mother was diagnosed with breast cancer in 1996, and after treatment and suffering she passed away on May 11, 2001.

3) What got my attention was in the 1st column, 1st paragraph on page 84 where they mentioned that her 1995 mammogram was misread.

1) The technician missed seeing the signs of cancer in 1995 that was discovered in 1996

2) The tech cried when the truth was realized

3) Human error had occurred and the family suffered because of this human error

4) When the truth was realized, the Buckners took the news with their usual Christian perspective, and they forgave without placing blame on anyone, endeavoring to try and ignore the "what-if's" that crept around the edges of their consciousness

Note: We could ask all the questions of why and who, but there are times that we should just realize that for whatever reason, some things are a part of God's overall plan.

B. Abraham and Isaac

1. Abraham was moving in response to God's Word
2. Isaac responded to His father in love and obedience, not comprehending or understanding why he was to be the sacrifice
 - a. Isaac was an unwilling participant, but he responded to his father's wishes
 - b. Can you imagine what Isaac was thinking
 - i. As he was being tied to the altar
 - ii. As his father lifted the knife
 - iii. As he looked in horror into his father's eyes as he laid on the altar

Note: We know that this story is represents Christ dying for us, but yet, the sorrow, the pain, the heartache involved with this story as innocent Isaac, who had not sinned was having to endure this extreme hardship.

3. Isaac asked his father as they climbed Mt Moriah, "Where is the Lamb?"
 - a. We have the wood.
 - b. We have the fire.
 - c. Where is the Lamb?
4. Abraham replied in Genesis 22:8...

My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering:

 - a. Niv...God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son."
 - b. For consideration
 - i. In the original Hebrew text, there are not punctuation marks, so this verse in the original can be divided in a way different than how the English translations rendered it.
 - ii. Therefore, we can read it like this
 - 1) God will provide (for Himself); The lamb for the burnt offering is my son.

2) Perhaps like this.

God will provide for Himself...but for this burnt offering, says Abraham, you my son will be the lamb.

3) In this passage, you can almost hear the Father's voice as He speaks through Abraham a prophecy that Abraham does not understand.

God will provide for Himself; The Lamb for the burnt offering is my Son

c. With this reference, we look forward in time

- i. To the time when up Golgatha walks the Lamb, the Son of God provided as a Brunt offering for the sins of man
- ii. No other Lamb would do, for Jesus is the Supreme Sacrifice which takes away sin
- iii. As Isaac wondered at the actions of his Father, we can hear Jesus cry out from the cross "My God, My God, Why hast thou forsaken me?" as He gave up the ghost.

C. Joseph and Benjamin

- 1. Joseph sold by his brothers into slavery
- 2. Some 13 years later, Joseph's brothers stand before him in Egypt wanting to buy grain
- 3. Joseph is harsh with them, even keeping one in prison while the others 9 went back to Canaan with the promise that when they came back, they would bring Benjamin
- 4. Of the eleven brothers, Benjamin was innocent, yet, he is the one chosen to suffer as Joseph tested his brothers
 - a. Benjamin was blessed with a double portion of food
 - b. Benjamin received favor
 - c. On the way home, Joseph's cup was found in Benjamin's sack
 - d. Let us consider
 - i. The brothers probably thought he was guilty
 - ii. All the circumstantial evidence pointed at Benjamin as being a thief
 - iii. Only Benjamin and Joseph knew that he was innocent

- iv. Did his brothers accuse him?
- v. What kind of emotions did Benjamin have?

Note: Joseph is testing his brothers by making Benjamin appear guilty. Have you ever considered that God may be trying to touch someone else's life who is watching us deal with the adversity in our lives, and whose lives will be impacted by how we respond to our situations.

D. Lazarus, whom Jesus loved

Note: This story is in John 11

- 1. v1..Lazarus is sick
- 2. v3...Lazarus' sisters sent unto Jesus, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.
 - a. We read these words in v5... Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus
 - b. Then we read in v6

When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was.

- 3. Questions arise as we read this story, and consider the questions that Lazarus, Martha, and Mary had as they waited for the one who loved their brother
 - a. Why isn't Jesus coming?
 - b. Is He mad about something
 - c. Have we offended Him
 - d. Perhaps the neighbors were thinking,
 - i. I thought Jesus loved him?
 - ii. He must not have been as close to Jesus as he thought he was?
 - iii. I wonder what they did to offend Jesus that He did not come
- 4. Then Lazarus dies, but we, the readers are given an insight into these events in verse 4

When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.

Note: Consider that some of our adversities could be for the glory of God.

III. Life requires us to Trust God

A. Realities collide

1. We know God loves us, but everything is going wrong in our lives
2. We know God can heal, then why did my love one die
3. We know God can heal, then why am I still dealing with this pain in my body
4. We know God can do all things, then why am I dealing with this financial burden
5. We know that everything is possible with God, then why is my family not serving God as they should

B. This is a faith walk

1. We must trust God even when we are dealing with something as Abraham did
2. We have to believe God as Job did, even when everything seems to be lost
3. We have to believe that Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life even when death is claiming our loved one
4. Notice Psalms 61:1-4

1) Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer. 2) From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I. 3) For thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy.

a. O Lord, lead me to the rock that is higher than I

b. Oh Lord, You are my shelter and strong tower

C. We have to remember that God's ways are not our ways

1. Notice Joseph's reaction in Genesis 43:30-31 when he saw Benjamin

30) And Joseph made haste; for his bowels did yearn upon his brother: and he sought where to weep; and he entered into his chamber, and wept there. 31) And he washed his face, and went out, and refrained himself, and said, Set on bread.

2. Jesus refrained himself to wait two more days even though the one He loved was sick

3. There are times that God refrains Himself from responding immediately because He is working toward a greater plan and goal than what we understand, so we have to live in faith.
4. Everything in the Word of God has a purpose
 - a. Job
 - i. The book of Job answers the cries and question of those who are suffering
 - ii. Job, you are not being punished
 - iii. Job, you were chosen for suffering
 - 1) Through your suffering your heart will be reborn
 - 2) Through your suffering, those who were your comforters experienced repentance and renewal
 - iv. Because of Job's faithfulness in suffering, he was blessed double
 - b. Benjamin was chosen for suffering
 - i. Benjamin did not suffer for anything he had done
 - ii. Benjamin suffered so his brothers could be tested.
 - iii. Benjamin's brothers defended Benjamin, and Joseph knew that they had changed.
 - iv. One writer said that when the nations of this world will stand in defense of Israel against their persecutors, instead of condemning Israel, then the Messiah will return to restore Israel to its rightful place as the leader of the nations of the world with Jesus the Son of God and the Son of David on the throne to rule from Jerusalem.
 - c. Isaac suffered as a type of Christ who died for us all
 - d. Lazarus suffered so others could see the glory of God
 - i. Lazarus is not being punished
 - ii. Lazarus was chosen for suffering
 - iii. Lazarus was chosen for suffering so the hearts of others could be transformed and reborn.

1) John 11:4

When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.

2) John 11:41-42

41) Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. 42) And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.

Note: Lazarus was chose so Jesus would be glorified, and so others would believe that the Father hath sent the Son.

iv. See the result of Lazarus' death and resurrection

1) John 11:45...Many believed on Him

Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.

2) Now, look at John 12:10 where Jesus is dining with Mary, Martha, and Lazarus

Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there: and they came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead.

Conclusion

1. The Bible says that Jesus tarried two more days when He heard that Lazarus was sick
 - a. Consider that Lazarus represent Israel
 - b. Israel was sick and is still sick nigh unto death, and Israel is the nation God loves
 - c. Israel did not recognize Jesus as the Messiah for it was hidden from them, which also represents their spiritual sickness
 - d. Tarrying two more days represents two millennial of time and then Jesus will appear on the scene to restore Israel as He restore Lazarus
2. We may think Jesus is not moving fast enough, but let us wait on the Lord, for He who loves you and I will restore us for His glory

3. Quit trying to place blame on others for our heartache, but see that God is working in our lives, and “let Him do His perfect work in us so that we may be complete lacking nothing.

4. Let us have Faith, against all odds

a. We frequently find ourselves in Lazarus’ shoes,

i. Like Lazarus, we do not know what is happening and why Jesus is tarring

ii. We can read in John 11:4-5 why Jesus is tarrying, but Lazarus does not know what is happening.

iii. Church, there are times that God’s love and plan, are hidden from us in exactly the same way they were hidden from Lazarus.

b. When we find ourselves in strange and difficult situations

i. We are inclined to have confidence that any minute now the Lord will intervene and make everything turn out all right.

ii. We expect His arrival at any moment,

iii. Time goes by and the circumstance only worsens;

iv. The Lord remains silent,

v. The Lord does not show Himself,

vi. Then, some will begin to gradually doubt the veracity of His love...

1) Where are You, Lord?

2) I put so much trust in You

3) I believed in You,

4) Why are You so quiet?

5) Can it be true that You don’t love me,

6) Could You really have forgotten me?

7) Does my suffering mean nothing to You?

8) Aren’t you coming to help me, to save me, to heal me?

- vii. Let us understand that the eleventh chapter of John teaches us
 - 1) That however tragic or inexplicable (mysterious, strange, perplexing, incomprehensible) the current circumstances in which we find ourselves, they are not accidental.
 - 2) Just as in the story of Lazarus, the secrets of God's love and His plan are concealed at their core.
 - 3) Let us remember that "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen,
- c. God's love in these stories is the secret ingredient that remains invisible due to the tragic visible circumstances.
 - i. Therefore, In spite of the circumstances, faith is continuing to believe in God's love even when everything around us testifies to the opposite.
 - ii. Despite all odds, press on to obtain a faith such as this.
 - iii. Focus your trust on the One who created you.
 - iv. Strive to possess a confidence in His love for you, even if neither you nor others can see this love right now.
 - v. Remember that even if His plan hides His love from you, yet, it is on this love that His plan has been based.
 - vi. It is through such plans that the Lord is truly preparing us for the priesthood and for the kingdom.
 - vii. God does genuinely desire to give us exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, but it is down His path and not ours that He leads us towards what is exceedingly abundantly above.