



Face the Issue:

This past Sunday, Rodney shared with us about remaining faithful and how to respond to change.

He focused on the story of the Israelites in 1 Chronicles 5.

What he didn't share is what caused them to stray. While we are not given the exact details, we can speculate that it was a crisis of faith. We will all have times in our lives when our faith in God will be challenged. These challenges come from many places. Other people, circumstances, changes to our lives, etc. God had been faithful to the Israelites and yet when they were exposed to new things and their circumstances changed, the Israelites faltered.

How would you define a "crisis of faith"?

Have you ever had a crisis of faith? If so, what were some of your thoughts and feelings as you went through this experience?

"Is God really who He says he is? Can God do what He says He can do?" In what way can you relate to these questions? If not these, what questions have you asked during a crisis of faith?

Into the Word:

Read Psalm 22:1-8.

After reading this passage, what similarities can you find between the psalmist David's situation and your own? What do you think was David's purpose for this prayer?

Look at verses 3-5. Why did David say these things to God? What's the point of praying such things? How does this compare to Rodney's advice to us about crying out to God.

As Christ followers, we know that others are watching how we deal with our circumstances as a church and as individuals. Look at verses 6-8. What did David encounter from the people surrounding him?

If you have ever experienced such comments or gossip, what were your thoughts or feelings at that time? What did you expect God to do during this experience? Did He do it?

Read Job 42:1-16.

Job went through the ultimate crisis of faith. If you are not familiar with his story, he lost everything. Family, possessions, health, and he did not know why. He had friends questioning him and his beliefs. He questioned God. When God finally broke His silence and answered, Job gave his response which you just read.

What do you think Job learned during his crisis of faith?

Can you think of any other biblical characters who endured a crisis of faith? What could we learn from them?

Apply The Word

Relationship with God is an adventure. It would be easier, perhaps, if we could anticipate the times of suffering and joy, trials and blessings. In reality, the only thing predictable about these seasons is that they will come—and they will go.

God is not absent from us in our time of faith crisis. We may not be able to discern His presence or sense His guiding hand, but He is there. In the meantime, we must not give up the search. We must keep trusting that the God we thought we knew is *more* than we knew. We can learn to embrace the crisis season, understanding that God's ultimate purpose is for our good.

Consider your own response to our current circumstances as a church. Name some specific things you are currently learning. How could these things be useful to you in your own daily Christian walk? How can these things be of value to those you minister to?