

Liberty LifeGroups Discussion

LOST AND FOUND

Nov 29, 2020

This Discussion Guide is prepared to help believers apply the truths of Scripture to life. As you prepare, make sure you have read the Scripture text and listened to the Sermon. If you missed the Sermon, go to www.experienceliberty.org and select the Sermon title listed above.

VERSES: JOEL 1:2-4

Dusty began this sermon speaking about items that we may have lost and forgotten. I remember being in school and losing my winter coat. My mom would be furious, because all I had was this one winter coat. One of the first things she would say to me was "Do you remember where you lost it?" Obviously, the answer was no mom, I don't. If I did it wouldn't be lost!

We are bad about losing things especially when other things occupy our interest. If I had a dollar for every phone my daughters have lost, I'd be rich. A lot of times we just resign to the fact they are lost forever. That isn't always true in God's eyes. All the time we've lost in our past, all the past mistakes and all the wasted energy we have spent gaining nothing can be set aside as we allow God to change our attitudes and work ethic. Joel uses a farming allegory to show us how God changes things. Hear the prophet speak!

Joel 1:2 *Hear this, O elders, And listen, all inhabitants of the land. Has anything like this happened in your days Or in your fathers' days?*

- Elders represent the older generation which should minister to a younger generation. What young children should you be pouring into with your lifetime of wisdom?
- Experience is a great tool for helping someone who is just starting their walk with God. What life experience could you share that would help a new Christian? Sometimes history is dismissed as irrelevant to a modern, progressive generation. What can such a generation, with all the technology and sophistication, learn from the experiences of the past? What advice would you give them to help them?
- At this time no great locust plague had occurred in Judah until now. This emphasizes the relevance of what was happening. (Although this is a literal story, it can be used allegorically to represent what happens to those people(s) who are spiritually strayed from God). Would God allow a plague of this magnitude in the good ole USA to get our attention?

Joel 1:3 *Tell your sons about it, And let your sons tell their sons, And their sons the next generation.*

- Do you pass "lessons" you've learned on to your kids...successes and failures! How do both help you kids grow in the knowledge of Christ? (Recount it to four generations, but of course the idea is to never cease passing it on.)
- Paul wrote to Timothy to take what he had taught him and pass it on to others. (2Tim2). Our church is always seeking spiritually mature men and women to lead our younger generation. What is it that Joe wants us to tell?
- **Read Judges 2:10-11.** Is it possible for the next generation(s) behind us to fall into the same ideology?

Joel 1:4 *What the gnawing locust has left, the swarming locust has eaten; And what the swarming locust has left, the creeping locust has eaten; And what the creeping locust has left, the stripping locust has eaten.*

The four descriptions of these locust (gnawing, swarming, creeping and stripping) leave no doubt that they were intended for total devastation of the land and its resources. Not only would that leave the land barren, but those who counted on its profit would be devastated as well.

- What “locust” has God used to get your attention?
- Do you think of God as mean if He allows tragedy in our lives?

Joel 2:12-13 *“Now, therefore,” says the LORD, “Turn to Me with all your heart, With fasting, with weeping, and with mourning.” So rend your heart, and not your garments; Return to the LORD your God, For He is gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, and of great kindness; And He relents from doing harm.*

- In this verse the Lord says “now”. When is the best time to turn to God for help or to repent? Why do we wait so long to call on God? (The more we put off repentance for sin that we have committed the less likely we are to repent and the more we put off repentance the harder becomes our heart. And so, repentance is something that is always to be carried out now.)
- Is there a sin that is unpardonable?
- God calls on us to turn to him with all our heart. What does that mean?
- When Nehemiah heard of the condition of the walls of Jerusalem, what did he do? (SEE Nehemiah 1:4)
- Weeping and fasting and mourning are all pictures of true repentance, of seeing our sin and genuinely turning away from it. What does repentance mean to you?

Rend is an unusual word.

- What does it mean?

God is not interested in a sham **religion**, but in authentic **relationship**. He is calling for an internal change, a change of heart. It is easy (and very impressive to others) to rend one's garments as a sham show, but God Alone sees the heart.

- How do we rend our hearts?
- When we rend our hearts to God, what should our external life look like?
- What makes the return to the Lord possible?
- Return to the Lord Your God...reveals the personal relationship you can have with The Lord. How close to God are you...is your relationship right?

I didn't think that the hesitation in my car engine and that little yellow “check engine” light on my dashboard really needed my immediate attention. I sang it away, saying that I would get to it tomorrow. However, the next morning when I turned the key to start my car, it wouldn't start. My first reaction was frustration, knowing that this would mean money, time, and inconvenience. My second thought was more of a resolution: I need to pay attention to warning lights that are trying to get my attention—they can mean something is wrong. Take a minute to do a quick spiritual checkup...you good?