

SERMON OUTLINE Ecclesiastes 4:1-3

Death Is Better than Oppression

OPPRESSION

Definition

Biblical Overview

1. *God is disgusted and insulted by oppression (Isaiah 10:1; Jeremiah 22:13; Proverbs 14:31).*
2. *God emphatically prohibits oppression (Zechariah 7:10; Exodus 23:6-7; 22:21; 23:9; Leviticus 19:13).*
3. *God is a stronghold for the oppressed (Psalm 9:9; 10:17-18; 119:134; Deuteronomy 26:7).*
4. *God executes justice for the oppressed (Psalm 146:7; 103:6; Proverbs 22:16; Malachi 3:5).*
5. *Defending the oppressed is the job of God's leaders (Psalm 72:1-4).*
6. *Defending the oppressed is the job of all God's people (Jeremiah 22:3; Isaiah 1:7).*
7. *The gospel is the good news that Jesus came to be oppressed (Isaiah 53:7) in order to deliver the oppressed (Luke 4:18-19).*
8. *For those who hope in God, oppression is often a means of fruitfulness (Exodus 1:12; Acts 8:1-8).*

THE PREACHER'S OPPRESSION OBSERVATIONS

Oppression Was Everywhere the Preacher Looked

Oppression Was Crushing for the Oppressed

The Oppressed Were Alone in their Despair

Oppression Is Only Possible when Someone Misuses their Power

THE PREACHER'S OPPRESSION CONCLUSIONS

It Is Better to Be Dead than Alive (2)

It Is Better Still to Have Not Yet Been Born (3)

SERMON DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

MAIN POINT

The big idea of this passage is that oppression is everywhere and it is one of the most grievous things known to God and man. The bigger idea and takeaway, however, is that because God saved the world through the oppression of His Son, God's people are liberated to liberate. We are freed from the oppression of sin to work toward freeing the oppressed, body and soul.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What were your thoughts on the text/sermon? What most stood out? How was it helpful? Confusing?
2. What's the first thing that comes to mind when you hear the word "oppression"?
3. What is oppression and when was the last time you heard it discussed?
4. Have you ever witnessed real, earthly oppression? Have you ever caused it? If so, what form did it take?
5. Which of the eight biblical principles on oppression was most surprising to you? Which was the most convicting?
6. How has God been a stronghold and executed justice for the oppressed in your life?
7. How have our leaders done a good job of defending the oppressed? How have they failed?
8. How has our church done a good job of defending the oppressed? How have we failed?
9. Are you able to easily connect oppression with the gospel and account for it in a Christian worldview?
10. Which of the Preacher's observations on oppression is most important for you to consider today?
11. Can you relate to the Preacher's conclusions at all? Why/not?
12. In what way/s did the sermon help you see the greatness of God?

AREAS OF APPLICATION

13. Make a list of all the times you hear oppression discussed throughout the course of your week (in person or in the media).
14. Carefully consider the eight biblical principles on oppression from Pastor Dave's sermon. Pray through the passages he cited.
15. If you are involved in oppressing anyone, repent.
16. Find one way to fight against oppression (prayer, advocacy, fostering, TFG, feeding, clothing, supporting pro-life causes, etc.).
17. Share the gospel with someone stuck in spiritual oppression.
18. Ask two different people in your family or DG (1) One thing they got from this sermon, and (2) How you can pray for them.
19. Pick one specific thing you mean to do differently, with the Spirit's help, as a result of the things you heard in this text/sermon.

PRAYER POINTS

20. Adoration. Praise God that He is righteous and is, therefore, disgusted by and prohibits oppression. Praise God that is a stronghold and fights for justice for the oppressed. Praise God that He is a comforter for the oppressed. Praise God that was willing to be oppressed in order to rescue the oppressed. Praise God that He is merciful.
21. Confess. Confess any ways you have participated in or been indifferent to the oppression of others. Confess any ways you've used your power for any purpose other than to give what God requires. Confess any ways you've tried to take oppression into your own hands or given into despair instead of relying on God. Confess any ways you've taken God's help for granted.
22. Thanksgiving. Thank God for ensuring the end of all oppression through the death and resurrection of His Son and the sending of His Spirit. Thank God that He comforts the oppressed and wipes away their tears.
23. Supplication. Ask God to end the suffering of someone you know who is oppressed. Ask Him to strengthen the persecuted church around the world. Ask Him to strengthen our missionaries who serve in closed countries. Ask Him to help you use your power to bless the world. Ask Him to give you a right mind and heart regarding oppression.