

PP#1: *Slide for the prayer of blessing over the LA mission team.*

Prayers of blessing over the LA mission trip.

PP: Offering Video

Offering

PP#2: “The Carrot, the Egg and the Coffee”

“He told them another parable: ‘The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.’” Matthew 13:33

SERMON: “The Carrot, the Egg and the Coffee”

PP#3: *Picture of carrots, eggs and coffee beans, and a saucepan in the middle.*

I. Intro: Any of you do any cooking?

A. I want you to think about cooking three different foods: carrots, eggs and coffee.

B. Let’s say we take each item and put them in a saucepan of boiling water for 20 minutes.

Think about what happens? Each one reacts differently!

1. Carrot: starts out hard, but gets soft and mushy.

2. Egg: Starts out as liquid, but turns “hard boiled”

3. Coffee bean: softens, but not mushy.

C. This cooking lesson helps us think about what it means to be a Christian

PP#4: *Saucepan with boiling water in it, subtitled, “The hot times of life.”*

II. Saucepan on stove with boiling water: Hardship, the “hot times of life,” being in “hot water”

A. We all go through hardships

-Difficulties in life

-Medical problems

-Financial losses and setbacks

-Relationship failures

-Strains with families

-Deaths of loved ones

-Failures of accomplishment or behavior

-Accidents

-Unexplained tragedies

-Which ones come to mind for you??

B. We all experience hardships, but different people react to hardship differently

PP#5: *Image of mashed carrots, or carrots cooking, etc., subtitled, “Turning soft & giving up.”*

III. Some are like the carrot that goes soft and mushy

A. In hardship, we loose confidence

-Loose heart, loose strength

-Crumble easily

-Quickly give up

-Feel overwhelmed, hopeless, despair

-Resign in failure

-Become incapacitated & can’t continue

-Give up

B. I want you to get into discussion groups of three.

-Move around if you have to. We’re going to break and talk 3 times.

-Groups of three: One of you take role of carrot, one of egg, one of coffee.

-Watch this first video and the carrot among you describe how you would respond to this

PP: Video #1

C. Video #1

PP#6: Discussion in groups of three: “Carrots” explain what you would do.

D. Small group discussion

PP#7: *Image of hard boiled eggs, eggs cooking, etc., subtitled, “Becoming hardened and angry.”*

IV. Others are like eggs

A. Go through hardships

- Can't tell on the outside; don't change on the outside,
- Yet they change radically on the inside
- Become “hard boiled”

B. Become hardened

- Embittered, resentful
- Always look on the negative side
- No longer dream or try new things
- Jaw clenched, daring the world to throw its worst
- No longer able to reach out to others, for are no longer feeling
- No longer able to change
- Can no longer hope for anything positive
- Can no longer see any new possibilities
- They face each new hardship with set resolution
- They get what they expect

C. We'll have another small group discussion

Get back into your small groups

This time the designated “egg” will share how you as an egg would respond, what would happen

PP: Video #2

D. Video #2

PP#8: Discussion in groups of three: “Eggs” explain what you would do.

E. Group discussion

PP#9: *Pile of coffee beans, subtitled, “Coffee bean Christians”*

- Softened, but not mushy

IV. Being a Christian means not being like a carrot or egg, but rather coffee!

A. It is changed: it is “softened,” but not mushy or loses itself

- God wants us to face hardships so that He can work on us and perfect us in faith
- God allows us to suffer trials because they bring us closer to Him
- Through hardship we realize that we cannot do it alone, that we need God
- Our faith is strengthened
- We learn to let God have control, and that we cannot be in control
- We learn patience,
- Humility,
- We learn dependence on God rather than ourselves
- We are corrected,
- Endurance,

PP#10: In this you rejoice, even if now for a little while you have had to suffer various trials, so that the genuineness of your faith—being more precious than gold that, though perishable, is tested

by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. 1 Peter 1:6-7

My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance; and let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing. James 1:2-4

-1 Peter 1:6-7 In this you rejoice, even if now for a little while you have had to suffer various trials, so that the genuineness of your faith--being more precious than gold that, though perishable, is tested by fire--may be found to result in praise and glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.

-James 1:2-4 “My brothers, whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance; and let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing.”

-Hardships and trying times are blessings, we grow in ways we don't when we are comfortable

PP#11: *Pile of coffee beans, subtitled, “Coffee bean Christians”*

-Softened, but not mushy

-Changes the water it's boiled in

B. But here's the key Xn principle: the coffee is changed, *but it also changes the water that boiled it!*

-God calls us to impact the hard situations and the world in which we face trials and hardships

-God not only gives us strength to endure and make it through them

-God also calls us to affect our surroundings *while we are suffering*

-We are God's witnesses in this world

-We are also God's ambassadors: bringing His grace, love and peace to others around us
While we suffer and endure!

-We show the world what it is like to suffer rightly, to endure with grace

-We show others that we are made of different stuff

-Everyone is pleasant when things go well

-Christians are most noticeably different when things go wrong

-Our most effective witness is when the water is hot!

-So we reach out to others who are also suffering, and we are able to minister to them

-Others see what it looks like to behave and react in healthy ways

-God uses us to bring His Kingdom into this hurting world of ours

-We are God's agents of change in our world

-God wants us in hot water, so we have best/most effective opportunities to make a difference!

PP#12: You are the salt of the earth -Matt. 5:13

You are the light of the world. . .let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.” -Matt. 5:14-15

The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened. -Matt. 13:33

-Matthew 5:13 "You are the salt of the earth"

-Matthew 5:14-15 "You are the light of the world. . .let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven."

-Matthew 13:33 “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.”

PP#13: *Pile of coffee beans, subtitled, "Coffee bean Christians"*

- Softened, but not mushy
- Changes the water it's boiled in
- Made possible by the Holy Spirit inside

C. We don't do this in our own ability

- When we rely on ourselves, we respond like carrots or eggs
- Only when we rely on God's strength in us can we react as we ought
- God gives us the Holy Spirit, living in us, living through us, guiding our responses
- To endure and persist through trials, since we are not strong enough alone
- To guide us into living for Jesus in our world, bringing His love, hope and grace into it
- To count our sufferings and trials as blessings and opportunities, to see them with gratitude
- Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

PP: Video #3

D. Video #3

PP#14: Discussion in groups of three: "Coffee beans" explain what you would do.

E. Discussion - How will you, coffee Christians, respond in this case?

PP#15: Repeat of slide #2.

VI. How about you?

- A. Do you feel tempted to be like the carrot, to give up and quit trying. Why bother?
- B. Do you struggle with feeling like an egg: perhaps not noticeably different on the outside, yet hardened in the inside. You don't want to let anything or anyone affect you any more?
- C. Well, God calls us as Christians to be like the coffee bean
 To be changed and perfected, humbled and learning to put God in charge
 But it changing the world around it: ushering in God's reign of peace with justice
 Love and mercy, grace and forgiveness
 In our hardening world.
- By God's indwelling Holy Spirit
 We are strengthened to persist through hardship
 We are made able to bring more of Christ's kingdom into this old world of ours.

PP#16: Repeat of slide #12

- Softened, mut not mushy
- Changes the water it's boiled in
- Made possible by the Holy Spirit inside

VII. So, today, open your hearts up to the Holy Spirit.

- Invite him to come and make you like coffee.
- To remind you when the going gets touch and things go wrong, to be coffee
- Not that you need coffee to do it right. No! You need the Holy Spirit.
- You can't do this in your own strength, at least for very long.

VIII. Pray with me: Lord, give to us each the Holy Spirit that we may be like coffee! Amen.