***Recap of the sermon from March 4, 2012 (John 5:16-23):***

*1. How does God use suffering in the lives of believers?*

*-Romans 5:3, suffering produces perseverance, perseverance produces character, and character produces hope*

*-2 Corinthians 1:3,4 – as we face trials/suffering we receive comfort from God, comfort that we can use in the lives of others to help them in their suffering*

*-2 Thessalonians 1:3,4 – suffering increases our faith and our love, makes us perseverant*

*-James 1:2-4, trials test our faith and can produce perseverance and maturity*

*-1 Peter 1:3-7, trials prove the genuineness of our faith which brings glory to God*

*-Job 42:5, trials/suffering deepen our relationship with God*

*2. Jesus uses the occasion of the healing of the paralytic by the Pool of Bethesda to assert His deity. In John 5:16-30 He claims equality with God, and in John 5:31-47 He introduces five witnesses who verify His claim.*

*3. Jesus is equal to God in essential nature according to vv. 16-18. Jesus claims a unique relationship with the Father. The Jews understood that He was making Himself equal with God.*

*-“The Jews understood Him to declare God to be His Father in a sense in which He was not the Father of other men. This is why they said He made, ‘Himself equal with God.’ The importance of this is seen in that it contains a direct claim on Jesus’ part to be equal with God, i.e., a claim of absolute Deity. The Jews so regarded His words, and Jesus took no pains to correct that impression; on the contrary, His words that follow are an argument to prove that He was God.” (Dr. Gray)*

*-“This passage alone is sufficient to dispel foolish notions that Jesus never claimed to be God, or cult contentions that the Son is not very God of very God.” (Dr. Unger)*

*4. Jesus claimed equality with God in power (vv. 19-23).*