



Hello Small Group Leaders!

Please visit our small group information page weekly with your group to see how you can engage with us. You'll always be connected and up to date on events and find encouragement and inspiration for your week.

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Discussion Questions - Week 1

1. The video noted five crucial ways to grow our faith. Which of these have been most crucial in growing your faith?
 - practical teaching
 - providential relationships
 - private disciplines
 - personal ministry
 - pivotal circumstances
2. Name 1-2 circumstances in your life have impacted your journey as a follower of Christ?
3. Why are some of us tempted to blame God when we have problems? How does it help to know that God promises troubles?

“In this world you will have trouble.” John 16:33

4. On a scale of 1-5, how easy do you find it to be completely honest with God in your prayers?
5. Why do some people see their problems as a way to grow and others don't? How can we learn to see unexpected problems in life as growth opportunities?

Practice

In prayer this week ask the Holy Spirit to give you a sense of gratitude for something that is happening right now in your life that doesn't make sense or feel positive to you.



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Discussion Questions - Week 2

1. Where were you when you heard about the events that happened in New York on 9/11?
2. Have you experienced the death of someone special in your life? If so, do you remember where you were when you heard the news?
3. How do you respond initially to an unexpected disappointment or shocking event?
4. What is your reaction to the train illustration in the film?
5. Do you have confidence in the Word of God? Why or why not?
6. How can you apply today's teaching to your life circumstances?

Scripture

"He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."

Revelation 21:4 ESV

*"Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?"
"But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."*

1 Corinthians 15:55, 57



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Discussion Questions - Week 3

1. Why do you think God either allows or sometimes “sends” painful experiences into our lives?
2. Why do you think that some people grow from pain and others refuse or resist to grow from it?
3. When has pain helped you to change course and go in a better direction in your life? Could you have changed without the pain?
4. Paul prays and fasts for three days before God sends help. What does this tell us about how to use pain in a positive way?
5. Ananias was *unexpectedly* asked to help Paul (Saul). Who is someone that you would be surprised and reluctant to help if asked to do so? Why do you think that is?

So Ananias departed and entered the house, and after laying his hands on him said, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road by which you were coming, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” Acts 9:17

Practice

Thank God for the unexpected experiences in your life that have led to transformation in mind, body or soul.



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Discussion Questions - Week 4

1. What are some of things you do to comfort yourself after a rough week or a difficult time? Are those comforts successful in alleviating your pain or suffering? If so, for how long?
2. Give an example of a time where you were witness to another person's unexpected event or circumstances. How did you deal with your feelings of helplessness?
3. How have you attempted to comfort others in their time of crisis? Does it match the current definition of comfort (freedom from pain or discomfort) or the old testament definition (strength, courage, bravery)?
4. In 2 Corinthians 1:3-7, Paul says that we are to offer comfort to others, the same comfort that has been given to us by God. How have you been comforted by God in the past?
5. What are some ways that you can offer someone "comfort" in the form of encouragement and strength during their unexpected event? Who do you need to reach out to this week to offer that?
6. Discuss the idea that the purpose of your life is to become like Jesus. How are you doing that?



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Discussion Questions - Week 5

1. Esther's first response was no. Why does she change her mind and accept the challenge?
2. What opportunities has God put in your life to speak up or act on behalf of others?
3. When is a time you were unexpectedly asked to step up or step into a role to help others? How did you respond?
4. Who is a Mordecai in your life who challenges you? How can you make sure you are open to listening?
5. How does Esther prepare to go to the king? What can we learn from her?
6. How can you prepare now so that you accept unexpected responsibilities?

Scripture Facts

The Book of Esther tells a story of the deliverance of the Jewish people. We are shown a Persian emperor, Ahasuerus (loosely based on Xerxes, 485–464 B.C.), who makes momentous decisions for trivial reasons, and his wicked minister, Haman, who takes advantage of the king's compliance to pursue a personal vendetta against the Jews by having a royal decree issued ordering their destruction. The threat is averted by two Jews, Esther and Mordecai. Their influence and intervention allow the Jews to turn the tables on their enemies and rout their attackers. This deliverance is commemorated by the inauguration of the Jewish festival of Purim on the fourteenth and fifteenth of Adar (mid-February through mid-March). The book confronts the modern reader with important themes, the evils of genocide and racism.

Esther's character matures over the course of the narrative. As a girl she is recruited for the king's harem because of her physical beauty. But at a key moment in the book (chap. 4), she rises to the challenge to risk her life for the salvation of her people. At that point, she transforms her status as queen from a position of personal privilege to one of power and public responsibility. [Read more](#)