



GROWTH GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS Winter Quarter - Lesson 4 - Week of February 4, 2024

Lesson: FACING PROBLEMS AND PAIN

Bible Verses: Acts 20:15-31; Psalm 50:15; Job 33:19-26; James 1:2-4; Psalm 34:19; Psalm 143:1; 2 Corinthians 4:8-12; 6:3-10; Acts 20:15-31

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

1. Are you challenged by life at the moment?
2. What is your favorite amusement park to visit?

DISCUSSION

DEVOTION: Father, you promised there would be faith, strength, and hope to meet life's problems. Give that strength to those of us whose anxieties have buried our dreams, whose illnesses have hospitalized our hopes, and whose burdens are bigger than our shoulders.

Think of a time when you saw someone display joy or courage even while suffering. How do you think that person was able to be joyful or courageous? As you think about hardships, how do you manage yours - the tension at home; the demands at work; the bills on your desk; or the illness in your body? Are you occasionally taken aback by God's silence? Is He paying attention to your hardships? Yes! God is always paying attention to His people. He knows what you are facing. Read Job 33:19-26; Psalm 34:19; and James 1:2-4. We should rely upon God as we face problems, challenges, and pain in our lives.

The apostle Paul faced many different kinds of challenges (2 Corinthians 4:8-12; 6:3-10). Faithfully and courageously, he was able to overcome them all. As Paul's third missionary journey was winding down, he still had many objectives he wanted to accomplish, such as visiting Spain. Yet, he became aware that his time for ministry was coming to an end. He was on the way to Jerusalem, and he expected that events there would lead him in a radical new direction. At one point, Paul gathered together the elders and leaders of the church in Ephesus and he gave them some parting words. Read Acts 20:15-31(NKJV).

1. Why did Paul ask the church elders to meet him in Miletus?
2. How was Paul tested during his ministry in Asia?
3. What was Paul's attitude toward the hardships he faced?
4. What were Paul's closing instructions to the elders?

In His wisdom, God doesn't reveal what will happen to us in the future and how bad or good it may be. He tells us to trust Him with all the arrangements. Our tendencies may always drift toward self-pity and questions, but God will draw us back toward the truth. Life is about God's purposes and plans. Your pain has a purpose. Your problems, struggles, heartaches, and hassles cooperate toward one end - the glory of God. This is not easy to accept - not for you and not for me. Read Psalm 50:15.

1. How does Psalm 50:15 challenge you to deal with your present problems?
2. Why is it important to recognize that pain is inevitable?
3. How can the Holy Spirit help you through life's difficulties?
4. What lessons has God taught you through the hardships you have endured?

Do not expect to get through life without enduring problems and pain. When trials come, do not attempt to face them without God and carry your pain alone. God stands ready to help you. The following psalms bring hope in hard times: Psalm 71; Psalm 121; Psalm 13; Psalm 63; and Psalm 30.

Eight Strategies to Help You Overcome and Face Problems

1. Read your bible (Psalm 119:105).
2. Stay in prayer (I Thessalonians 5:17).
3. Cast down arguments and negative thoughts (2 Corinthians 10:5).
4. Choose faith over fear (2 Timothy 1:7).
5. Abstain from sin (1 Thessalonians 5:22).
6. Seek strength and wisdom from God (2 Corinthians 12:9-10).
7. Trust God's plan (Jeremiah 29:11).
8. Trust God completely (Proverbs 3:5).

Prayer Focus: God, help me face my current problems and compel me to turn my burdens over to you.