Small Group Guide

"When We Suffer for God" | Jeremiah 34-38

Before You Meet

Encourage group members to read Jeremiah 36-38 before gathering. Ask them to come prepared to share one thing that really stood out to them about either the sermon or the chapters in Jeremiah.

Key Takeaways

1. Suffering due to our obedience is not a sign that God has abandoned us.
2. Scripture invites us to use suffering as another way through which we can identify with our Lord.
3. While it may cause difficulty and suffering, obedience to God is far more valuable than the “comforts of compromise.”
4. Jesus Christ is our ultimate example of suffering *because* of obedience.

Discussion Questions

Opening Questions

Use these to help the group warm up and begin thinking about the theme.

1. The pastor opened with this question: "How do we respond when we are called to face hardship and suffering for following God and for walking in obedience to His perfect will?"
2. Jeremiah Have you ever experienced a relationship change because of your faith or your obedience to God? How did that feel?

Digging into the Text

1. In chapter 35, the Rechabites are presented as an example of faithful obedience in contrast to the unfaithfulness of Judah. What can we learn from people around us who model faithfulness? What would it take for us to become like the Rechabites?

2. The pastor noted that while King Jehoiakim was cutting up and burning the scroll, some of the princes protested while others stayed passive and silent. What are some areas in your own life where you have become “passive and silent” towards God’s word?
3. Jeremiah was beaten, imprisoned, falsely accused, starved, and thrown into a muddy pit, all because he faithfully delivered God's message. How does Jeremiah’s example of sincere suffering challenge your own perspective on hardship? What is the difference between being uncomfortable for the gospel and being persecuted for the gospel?

Personal Reflection Questions

1. The pastor asked, “How do you respond to hardship?” And “What is the price of your obedience?” Take a moment to answer that honestly.
2. What are the areas of your life right now where you are more likely to compromise than to obey?
3. Jeremiah eventually found himself at the bottom of a pit. Ebed-Melech pulled him from the pit. He even placed rags under Jeremiah’s arms so he didn’t hurt Jeremiah when pulling him out. What can we learn from the care Ebed-Melech showed toward Jeremiah?
4. Who in your life has been an Ebed-Melech to you, someone who showed tremendous care towards you when you found yourself in a pit?

Practical Applications

Choose one or two of the following to discuss as a group and commit to practicing before your next meeting.

- **Identify your cost.** This week, take time to honestly assess what obedience to God is currently costing you, or what compromise is currently costing you. Write it down. Bring it before God in prayer.
- **Reframe your suffering.** If you are walking through a hard season, spend time this week meditating on what God says suffering is producing in you.
- **Carry your cross.** Picking up your cross daily is an intentional act of dying to yourself and living for Christ. As we live for Christ…truly live for Him, there will be days of hardship and suffering. But remember that our reward is not comfort in this life, it is full communion with God in the next.

Closing Prayer

Close your time together by praying as a group. Be sensitive to topics that came up during discussion.