



WEEK 4: GROWING THROUGH TRIALS

The Week of February 25th

ICEBREAKER

Think back to a trial in your life. How did others encourage you or show up for you in that trial?

VIDEO NOTES

Jesus: "Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you..."
Matthew 28:20 (NLT)

Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." ³⁷ He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled.

³⁸ Then he said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me."

³⁹ Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."

⁴⁰ Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Couldn't you men keep watch with me for one hour?" he asked Peter. ⁴¹ "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

⁴² He went away a second time and prayed, "My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done." ⁴³ When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. ⁴⁴ So he left them and went away once more and prayed the third time, saying the same thing.

⁴⁵ Then he returned to the disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour has come, and the Son of Man is delivered into the hands of sinners. ⁴⁶ Rise! Let us go! Here comes my betrayer!"

⁴⁷ While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived. With him was a large crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests and the elders of the people.
Matthew 26:36-47 (NIV)

We also glory in our sufferings,
because we know that suffering produces perseverance;
perseverance, character; and character, hope.
Romans 5:3-4 (NIV)

1. Suffering produces _____

We ought always to thank God for you, brothers and sisters, and rightly so, because your faith is growing more and more, and the love all of you have for one another is increasing.

⁴ Therefore, among God's churches we boast about your perseverance and faith in all the persecutions and trials you are enduring.

⁵ All this is evidence that God's judgment is right, and as a result you will be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are suffering. 2 Thessalonians 1:3-5 (NIV)

2. Perseverance produces _____

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, ³ because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. ⁴ Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. James 1:2-4 (NIV)

3. Character produces _____



KEY QUESTION

What is a problem in your life that has produced growth in your character?

OTHER DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Optional questions to dive deeper as time allows)

1. What is your response to suffering? Do you tend to doubt and fight, (“Why is this happening to me?”) or have you accepted that trials and sufferings will happen, and then ask God to grow you to be more like Christ?
2. When you are facing a trial, temptation, or suffering, are you more likely to pray to be more *comfortable*, or to be *conformed*? What is the difference between the two?
3. How have you seen the sailboat illustration in your life? Have you ever seen two people in the same situation respond very differently?

PERSONAL ACTION STEP

Bible verses help to protect us when we face temptation and stabilize us when we are confused.

Brainstorm or share in your group some effective ways to memorize a Bible verse and do your best to memorize this verse this week:

*We also glory in our sufferings,
because we know that suffering produces perseverance;
perseverance, character; and character, hope.
Romans 5:3-4 (NIV)*

PRAYER & SUPPORT

Ask how you can pray for and support one another this week.

Then, close in prayer. Ask God to produce these three things in your life. Perseverance, character, and confident hope. Ask God for relief, but include this statement from Jesus a part of your closing prayer, “Yet not as I will, but as you will. Your will be done.”



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