



Your Move

Week 4 - Challenges That Transform

Discussion Guide

All of us have been dealing with, are currently in, or are headed into a challenging situation. And that's par for the course of our lives. Challenges and tests bring pain, but so much more. They have great value in our spiritual journey and development. As a Life Group, take time through this study to really allow God to broaden your perspective and appreciation for the challenges in your lives!

Jump Start

1. When have you seen someone's "true colors" come out as a result of a challenge they were facing? (Hint: This may be a story about yourself!)
2. *Challenges identify our areas of weakness. Read Jeremiah 17:9-10 and Psalm 139:23-24.* How does God use challenging circumstances to make us more self-aware? Talk about a time when you faced a challenge that helped you grow.
3. *Challenges produce maturity in us. Read Psalm 119:71 and James 1:12.* These verses call us to persevere when we are enduring challenges. According to each of these verses, why is it good for us to go through suffering? How can we remain "steadfast" when our circumstances are difficult?
4. *Challenges lead us to Christ. Read Psalm 121:1-2 and Mark 5:18-20.* How would it affect our reliance on God if we never faced challenges? How do our challenges reveal our need for Christ?
5. **Final Thought:** This week, we learned that challenges expose us, meaning that sometimes a challenge will force us to come face-to-face with our own shortcomings and weaknesses. Often, during times of struggle, there are small signs of brokenness in our lives that we may not have consciously known: things like an inappropriate thought-life, a short temper, stress-eating or a host of other small signs. These can be "tells" for us during our trials, revealing concealed issues. Jesus has given us freedom from the bonds of hidden sin. If challenges are bringing out the worst in you, ask God to use the challenge as an opportunity to grow your faith and your character in those exact areas.

Deeper

6. **Read 2 Corinthians 12:5-10.** In the familiar children's song *Jesus Loves Me*, we sing that "Little ones to Him belong; they are weak, but He is strong." Consider your own weaknesses: areas where you know you have room to grow. When you begin to think about your weaknesses (or personal challenges) as opportunities to draw closer to God and let Him work in you, how does that shift your perspective of them?

Leader's Note: As Paul says in this passage, he actually boasts, not only in weakness, but in "insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities." He has come to know that Christ's power is made visible in our weakness. Think about how Paul came to the point that he was able to boast about his weaknesses. Maybe you would want to discuss how that mental transformation came about it. Because we also need to be coming swiftly to the point where we embrace challenges, knowing that when we are weak, Jesus is strong.

7. Make a private list of your areas of weakness. Do a bible study on them. For example, if you deal with anger, do a word search on anger, patience, gentleness, and forbearance. Then ask God specifically:
- What are you trying to teach me?
 - What are you trying to show me?