



Loading

Part 4 – Keep Growing in Difficult Times

Discussion Guide

From the moment we ask Jesus to be our Lord and Savior, we enter a process of becoming more like Jesus. This process demands sacrifice, self-examination, and commitment to follow through. It is no wonder that many people give up on the process in the middle of “loading.” They may have salvation, but many never get to experience the full benefits of a relationship with God. This week, we look at how to keep growing in difficult times and how God will use that in our lives and the lives of others.

Jump Start

Leader: This section is designed to get discussions started, examine God’s truth and apply it to our week.

1. What is one obstacle in your life you feel you have fully overcome? Did you feel God’s presence and comfort during the process?
2. **Read [Job 1:6-12](#) and [Job 2:3-6](#).** Job was first tested with the loss of all his possessions and then the death of his children. After God gave the okay, Satan also had the power to hurt Job’s physical body. Why does God allow this? If you were tested like Job, what would be the outcome? What would God—and the people around you—say of your faith and endurance?
3. **Read [1 Peter 4:12](#).** What are some “fiery trials” we see in the Bible? Why does Peter tell us to expect these kinds of trials? How have the fiery trials you’ve experienced strengthened your relationship with God? How have they affected the relationships you have with those who were with you in the struggle?
4. **Read [1 Peter 1:6-7](#) and [John 9:1-3](#).** This is the first verse we see this weekend about “rejoicing” during our trials. There is some good news here. Why are we tested? What does it bring about?
5. **Read [Romans 5:3-4](#).** How does rejoicing in our suffering help us? According to Paul, what is the ultimate relationship between hope and suffering? In what sufferings do you need to rejoice today?

6. Final Thought: **Read [2 Corinthians 1:4](#)**. How can we receive God's comfort? Why does God often choose to comfort us instead of taking away our trials? When do our struggles and trials start "making sense," according to this passage?

Deeper

Leader: This section is designed for further use in your Life Group or for personal study. These can also be used as discussion points and ways to stay connected with your group throughout the week.

This series is all about understanding the fact that we are all "loading." We are all in the process of becoming who God has called us to be. This week, we focus on remaining faithful, growing, and even being used by God even while we are still in the middle of our trials and struggles.

7. We first meet Joseph in **Genesis 37**. He is his father's favorite. He is a bit immature and boastful—and he is hated by his brothers. List the trials of Joseph. Note also how we know God was with him.
- a. [Genesis 37:18-28](#):
 - b. [Genesis 37:36](#):
 - c. [Genesis 39](#):
 - d. [Genesis 40:9-15, 20-23](#):
 - e. [Genesis 41:1, 14-16](#):
8. After interpreting the Pharaoh's dreams and explaining what he must do to save his people from famine, Joseph was promoted to rule over Egypt, subject only to Pharaoh ([Genesis 41:37-43](#)). After many years in power, his brothers came from Canaan to buy food, as the famine was across much of the world. **Chapters 42-47** are the story of Joseph, now on top, testing his brothers. How do you see them being tested and "the genuineness of their faith" being proven in the passages below?
- a. [Genesis 42:18-28](#):
 - b. [Genesis 43:1-10](#):
 - c. [Genesis 44:1-2, 7-13, 30-34](#):
9. We find that God, through the struggles and hardships, was present and that He had a master plan. **Read [Genesis 50:15-21](#)**. What does this passage say to you about your struggles?