



For Group Discussion

Answer these questions prior to your Small Group meeting this week.

Introduction

God is at work in this world, and He invites us to join Him. We can choose to be a part of His work, or we can be a hindrance to what He is trying to accomplish. His goal for us is to bear His image to others. In order to accomplish this goal He chooses to use difficult circumstances to develop His character in each of us.

Discussion Questions

1. There are two big ideas in this sermon series. First, God is always at work (read John 5:17), and secondly, He invites us to partner with Him to accomplish that work (read Ephesians 2:10). What is your personal reaction to these ideas? How can these ideas change the trajectory of a person's life?

2. Sometimes our choices allow us to be fruitful and productive for God. Read Titus 3:14. Share a choice you've made that makes it more likely for you to be fruitful and productive in your work for God?

Sometimes we hinder the work of God with our perspective. Read Matthew 16:21-23. How did God's plan differ from Peter's desired outcome? Share a time when God's plan may have differed from your desired outcome for your life. How did you respond?

3. Read Ephesians 4:11-13 and James 1:2-4. God's number one priority for us is to grow to measure up to the character of Christ. Why is this an important perspective to take on as we face the difficulties He uses to grow our endurance and maturity?

Name some inappropriate responses we have to difficulties. How do these inappropriate responses cause us to miss the chance to develop and mature the way God intends?

4. If God uses difficulties in our lives to produce endurance and full maturity, we must be thinking clearly when trouble strikes. What are some areas of your life God may be using right now to develop and mature you in Christ?

Small Group Questions Continued

What practical step will you take this week to make sure your difficulties are not wasted?

OUTREACH: GROUPS IN ACTION

OUR CHURCH

Ask your small group leader about serving opportunities at Emmanuel. We need help with the Host Team, Children's Ministry, the production team and student ministries teams.

OUR COMMUNITY

Prepare lunch for volunteers building a house with Habitat for Humanity on October 14. Contact Jim Gearries at jgearries@eclife.org.

OUR WORLD

Collect "dorm type items" for Hope Road Nicaragua that will be given to students living in Nicaragua the week of October 16-23. Drop these items off at the Info Desk. Would you also commit to praying for the members going, the communities they will be serving, and all the people they will encounter!

Action Step

Fill in the blanks below for this upcoming week.

My action steps are _____

_____.

I'm accountable for _____, and their action steps are

_____.

My memory verse is _____.

This coming week, I'm praying for: