

CLOSER THAN EVER

WEEK 4
PSALM 34:18
DANNY ANDERSON

Draw **near** to God, and he will draw **near** to you. *James 4:8*

Allow pain to **humble** you.

The Lord is near to the **brokenhearted** and saves the **crushed** in spirit. *Psalm 34:18*

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in **trouble**.
Psalm 46:1

The pain that breaks your heart creates the **opportunity** for God to draw near.

The high and lofty one who lives in eternity, the Holy One, says this: "I live in the high and holy place with those whose spirits are **contrite** and **humble**. I restore the **crushed** spirit of the **humble** and revive the courage of those with repentant hearts." *Isaiah 57:15*

How do we allow pain to humble us?

You must see **God** in the pain.

"God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pains: it is his megaphone to rouse a deaf world."
C.S. Lewis

"You intended to harm me, but **God** intended it all for **good**."
Genesis 50:20

And we know that God causes **everything** to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them. *Romans 8:28*

We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about the **troubles** we experienced in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our **ability to endure**, so that we despaired of life itself. Indeed, we felt we had received the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not **rely** on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead. *2 Corinthians 1:8-9*

"God's address is the end of your rope." Dallas Willard

Why does God draw close to humble people?

God wants to **partner** with them.

"You intended to harm me, but **God** intended it all for **good**. He brought me to this position so I could save the lives of many people." *Genesis 50:20*

Will you allow the pain to harden you or humble you?

Participating in the 21-Day Fast?
Download the Emmanuel Church App in the App Store or on Google Play for follow-up videos and encouraging messages from Danny throughout the week.

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For Group Discussion

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

Introduction

Things happen in this life that break our hearts. Difficulties, disappointments, hardships, trials – no one escapes the things that break us to pieces. The things that break our hearts can either make us bitter or make us better – they can harden our hearts or humble our hearts. When your heart is humbled, you can draw closer than ever to God.

Discussion Questions

1. Read Psalm 34:18. The words David used for "brokenhearted" and "crushed" literally mean to be broken into small pieces, to be pulverized. Has this ever happened to you? Share a time when you felt as though you were completely broken.

2. Pain doesn't automatically bring us closer to God. Read 2 Corinthians 1:8-9. Describe the way you see Paul responding to adversity in these verses.

During your most recent trial, disappointment, or pain, would you say you found yourself drawing closer to God or pushing Him away? Why?

3. Pain can do its work in us when we see God in it. How would you describe the work God wants to do in you through your current pain or difficulties?

Read Genesis 50:20 and Romans 8:28. What keeps you from having the same confidence as Joseph (Genesis) and Paul (Romans) in the middle of your trials?

Audio and video messages are available at eclife.org under "RECENT MESSAGE" on the home page.

4. When we allow our pain to humble us, we can draw closer to God. Read James 4:6-8. What adjustments can you begin to make this week to ensure your pain and adversity humbles you, and doesn't harden you?

OUTREACH: GROUPS IN ACTION

Our local missions partner, The Refuge, is in need of wrapped treats and valentine cards for the after-school program. As a group or family, gather your treats and cards by February 12 and bring them at the Information Desk at your campus. Also consider writing a note to let those served by The Refuge know they are loved and prayed for.

Did you complete the 21-Day fast? We want to hear from you! Share your story with us at mystory@eclife.org or via the church app.

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: