

Guide for Growth Group Hosts

Week #3: God Didn't Answer My Prayer

THINK ABOUT IT

What amazing things has God done in your life between last session and this session? Share it with the group!

MAIN GROWTH GROUP SCRIPTURE

"In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

John 16:33 (NIV)

DISCOVERY QUESTIONS

- Have you ever been frustrated with God because you felt that He didn't answer your prayer or that He didn't answer your prayer fast enough? Explain.
- We often define "unanswered prayer" as not getting what we asked for, but what about when a loving God answers in a way other than "yes"? Have you ever experienced a situation where God answered in a way other than "yes"? Discuss with the group.
- Throughout the Bible we encounter verses that speak of God seeing all and knowing all. As a general question, why do you think we question God?
- The Christian life is not a pain-free life - the Christian life is an overcoming life. God never implied that life would be easy, but He told us that He would always be with us. Discuss a specific time in your life when you felt that God was with you in the midst of a difficult situation.
- There are only two responses to pain: *Let God in or shut God out*. What do you think makes people choose each option?
- (Read the Verse Below) Sometimes the pain in life is producing something big in you. Think about that for a moment. What do you think God is trying to produce in you?

*We rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope: and hope doesn't disappoint us. **Romans 5:3-5***

- (Read the Verse on the Next Page) God will bear my pain with me and for me. The verse mentions that Jesus was pierced, crushed, and wounded just for you. What does that say about God's love for you? With this new perspective about God's love, how does that relate to God answering (or not answering) prayer?

*Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering. . . . He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. **Isaiah 53:4-5 (NIV)***

- Your pain is not just about you. God wants you to use your pain to help/serve other people. Based on your life experiences, how can you help others through their pain?
- (Read the Verse Below) The pain you are experiencing won't last forever. After hearing the verse, what does it mean to you?

*"He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." **Revelation 21:4 (ESV)***

LIFE APPLICATION

We will all encounter trying times in our life, but God will be with us. Look at what the Bible tells us: *Cast your cares on the Lord and he will sustain you...* Psalm 55:22 (NIV). What are some practical ways that you can "cast your cares on the Lord" related to what you are currently experiencing in your life?

DIVE DEEPER

Go deeper during the week!

- Take time to reread all of the verses from this session. If you need a list of the verses (book, chapter and verse), ask the Growth Group Host. You can download and use the YouVersion app on your smartphone to read the verses.
- Read the **daily devotionals** each day found at www.experienceheritage.org/blog. You can sign up to have them delivered daily to your email inbox by clicking here: <http://experienceheritage.org/Devotionals>.
- Read the **Memory Verse** below each day during your quiet time with God. See if you can memorize the verse prior to the next session.

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John 16:33 (NIV)

PRAYER GUIDANCE

(During the prayer time, pray that God would help everyone to use their pain to impact and help someone else.)



Growth Group Checklist

- (After the prayer, decide who will bring the snack next week and share any other announcements.)
- (Encourage the group participants to have a “quiet time” with God each day to study the bible and pray)
- (Encourage the group participants to pray for each other during the week.)
- (Remind the participants that they can view the message each week on our website: <http://experienceheritage.org>)