



FAITH IN THE MIDST OF TRIALS

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WORSHIP

Begin your group with a time of worship. If someone in your group can lead worship, invite them to lead two or three songs. Alternatively, consider using one or more of these songs from our Sunday morning worship time:

- **I Know That I Know** (*The Belonging Co.*)
- **God Is Not Against Me** (*Elevation Worship*)
- **Been So Good** (*Elevation Worship*)

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

- 1 Peter 1:1-25

OPENING PRAYER (10 min)

Ask someone to open in prayer, inviting the Holy Spirit to guide your discussion and help the group apply God's Word to their lives.

SERMON OVERVIEW

1. God can do anything with anyone (Peter's transformation from fisherman to apostle)
2. Hope, faith, and joy are possible in the midst of suffering
3. We belong to God's eternal kingdom, which is worth more than anything on earth
4. Our faith is refined through trials, like gold through fire
5. We are called to live holy lives as sojourners in this world

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (35-40 min)

Section 1: Peter's Journey (10 minutes)

1. Reflecting on Peter's story: What encourages you most about Peter's transformation from an "unschooled, ordinary man" to a bold apostle?
2. Personal Application: Is there someone in your life you've been tempted to give up on? How does Peter's story challenge you to maintain hope for their transformation?
3. The Key Factor: Acts 4:13 says the religious leaders "took note that these men had been with Jesus." What does it look like practically to "be with Jesus" in your daily life?

Section 2: Faith Through Trials (15 minutes)

1. Understanding Trials: Peter writes that trials come "so that the proven genuineness of your faith...may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed" (1 Peter 1:7). How does this perspective change the way you view current difficulties?
2. The Refinement Process: Pastor Brian mentioned that "something is forged in the human soul that can only happen under trial." Can you share an example from your life or someone you know where this proved true?
3. Joy in Suffering: How is it possible to have "inexpressible and glorious joy" (v. 8) while simultaneously experiencing grief and trials? What's the difference between joy and happiness?

Section 3: Living as Sojourners (15 minutes)

4. Holy Living: Peter calls believers to "be holy in all manner of living" (1 Peter 1:15). What does holiness look like in practical, everyday terms? What areas of your life need attention?
5. Girding Your Mind: Peter uses the phrase "girding up the loins of your mind" (v. 13), preparing for a mental and spiritual marathon. What specific practices help you prepare your mind for spiritual endurance?
6. Peer Pressure: Pastor Brian mentioned not giving in to peer pressure, whether young or old. Where do you feel the most pressure to conform to the world rather than to Christ?
7. Love One Another: Peter concludes chapter 1 by calling believers to "love one another deeply, from the heart" (v. 22). How does loving other believers help us endure trials? Who in your life needs to experience this kind of love from you this week?

KEY TAKEAWAYS (5 mins)

Have group members share which of these truths resonates most with them:

- God can transform anyone - Don't give up on people, including yourself
- Trials refine genuine faith - Suffering has purpose in God's kingdom
- Our inheritance is secure - We are shielded by God's power for salvation
- We are sojourners - This world is not our home; live for eternity
- Love identifies us - Sincere love for one another marks us as Christ's disciples

PRACTICAL APPLICATION (10 Mins)

Choose one of the following action steps to implement this week:

1. Pray for someone you've given up on - Commit to praying daily for someone's transformation, trusting God can do anything with anyone.
2. Journal through a trial - Write about a current difficulty through the lens of 1 Peter 1:6-9, focusing on hope, faith, and joy rather than just the problem.
3. Practice "girding your mind" - Start each morning this week with 10 minutes preparing your mind spiritually (Bible reading, worship, prayer) before checking your phone or email.
4. Show deep love - Identify one person in your church community who needs encouragement and reach out to them with a call, text, meal, or visit.
5. Embrace your sojourner identity - Identify one area where you're too comfortable with worldly patterns and take a concrete step toward holiness.

CLOSING PRAYER

Close by thanking God for the example of Peter's transformation, for the living hope we have through Christ's resurrection, and for the eternal inheritance awaiting us. Ask for grace to endure trials with joy and to love one another deeply.