



242 small groups

Weekend of July 16 & 19 | The Good News In Disappointment

Ice Breaker Question:

- **We all need good news and something to laugh about. Share your favorite joke!**

Weekly Check In

- **What has God been teaching you in your Daily Encounter this past week?**

This Week's Big Idea: We can display the Good News of Jesus even in the midst of life's disappointments.

What do you remember most, or what stuck with you from the weekend's teaching?

Group Interactive (10-15 minutes):

Read aloud together Acts 16|11-40 and discuss the following questions:

- What happened to Paul & Silas when they were in Philippi? How did they respond in the midst of their suffering and disappointment?
- How was God able to use their situation?

Scripture and Discussion Questions:

1 Thessalonians 2|13 & 17-18 “And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is indeed at work in you who believe...
17 When we were orphaned by being separated from you for a short time (in person, not in thought), out of our intense longing we made every effort to see you. **18** For we wanted to come to you—certainly I, Paul, did, again and again—but Satan blocked our way.”

1. Paul had “intense longing” to travel back to visit the people of Thessalonica but wasn’t able to come visit them. Share something that you had planned this spring or summer that was cancelled or postponed.
2. How did you respond to that disappointment?

2 Corinthians 1|8-10 “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. **9** 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. 10 He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us again. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us. 11 as you help us by your prayers. Then many will give thanks on our behalf for the gracious favor granted us in answer to the prayers of many.”

3. Paul understood his reactions were just as important as his actions; so he strove to set a good example. Who is watching how you respond when life gets disappointing?
4. How does Paul show us to respond to disappointments in a way that doesn't seem like we are just pretending "everything is alright?"

1 Thessalonians 2|1-4 “You know, brothers and sisters, that our visit to you was not without results. 2 We had previously suffered and been treated outrageously in Philippi, as you know, but with the help of our God we dared to tell you his gospel in the face of strong opposition. 3 For the appeal we make does not spring from error or impure motives, nor are we trying to trick you. 4 On the contrary, we speak as those approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please people but God, who tests our hearts.”

5. After the disappointment and hardship in Philippi, Paul could have given up. What was Paul's motive for continuing to share the Good News in Thessalonica?
6. We live in a day and age that if something does not come fast and easy, we think that must mean God is not in it. For Paul, many times the fact that something was hard and overwhelming was a sign he was exactly in the right place. What is something hard or difficult in your life right now? Can you see God working?

Next Steps:

Despite continued hardship, disappointment, and persecution, Paul continued to trust God and encouraged the early believers to “follow my example as I follow Christ” (1 Cor 11|1). Sometimes trying to follow Paul's example seems like a daunting task...



But who is someone **in your life right now** whose example you can follow? Is there someone in your Small Group who has gone through something similar to what you're experiencing? Is someone "further" ahead in their walk with God that you look up to?

This week reach out to them and ask them to coach or mentor you through the situation you are experiencing or about taking your next step with God.

A great coaching resource to check out is *Right Now Media*. You can sign up for a free account at 242community.com/nextsteps and scroll down to the *Right Now Media* link.

Weekend of July 23 & 26 | The Good News in Disappointment: LEADER GUIDE

Ice Breaker:

Start your group off with some laughter!

Weekly Check-In:

- Have your group share what God has been teaching them through the Bible.

Group Interactive:

Read together as a Small Group Acts 16 to hear the background story of what happened in Philippi, the city Paul visited before coming to Thessalonica. Unpack with your group what you read and how Paul & Silas responded to the disappointments and suffering they experienced.

Scripture and Discussion Questions:

The flow of this week lesson is:

- We will have disappointments in life.
- We have friends, family, co-workers, & neighbors watching to see how a “Christian” responds to disappointment.
- Our faith in the Good News of Jesus helps us look past our present situations in order to trust that God will use everything for His glory and our good.

Spend some time this week with your Small Group unpacking what it looks like to respond as Paul or Jesus would in the disappointments we experience. Talk about how we can be real and genuine in experiencing our let-downs and difficult situations and not just slapping on a “everything is fine” smile.

The world is looking for perfect people. The world is looking for people who can show them how to find hope and joy in the midst of life’s disappointments.

Next Steps:

With the Summer 2020 Small Group term ending next week, this is a perfect season for coaching relationships to form and develop.

Coaching relationships can happen naturally in Small Group as the people in your group already know each other. But taking that first step can often seem hard. It’s risky to invite someone into your life to help coach or mentor you, but the regards to having someone know you better and walking alongside you in life are always worth it.

As the Small Group leader, maybe you’ve already noticed some natural coaching “matches” within your group. Perhaps someone has already gone through what another person is currently struggling with. Pray and talk to those people individually to see if they’ve thought about entering into a coaching relationship.

Remember- it’s not your job to coach everyone in your group. We give you enough other things to occupy your time ;) As the Small Group Leader, part of your role is helping others identify their next step and connecting them to others who can help them actually take that step.

Encourage your Group to check out Right Now Media as it is a rich resource for not only coaching but personal discipleship and a great tool to use during this down season between Small Group terms.