

WHAT IF?

ANSWERING LIFE'S TOUGH QUESTIONS

LESSON 1 // LIFE GETS HARD

Big Idea: Life is hard at times, like it was for the Israelites in their Exodus from Egypt. Just because we're believers in Jesus, we're not immune to trouble, difficulties and pain.

What if your life gets hard? What should you do? Look up (trust God), look in (grow), look around (see), cry out (pray), reach out (connect with others) and hold on (set your hope on the promises of God).

Psalm 121:1-2 (NIV) *I lift up my eyes to the mountains—where does my help come from? ² My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth.*

Psalm 18:6 (NIV) *In my distress I called to the LORD; I cried to my God for help. From his temple he heard my voice; my cry came before him, into his ears.*

Psalm 51:10 (NIV) *Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.*

Hebrews 10:25 (NLT) *And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near*

Romans 5:3-5 (NCV) *We also have joy with our troubles, because we know that these troubles produce patience. ⁴ And patience produces character, and character produces hope. ⁵ And this hope will never disappoint us, because God has poured out his love to fill our hearts. He gave us his love through the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to us.*

Start Talking:

Why do you think God allows us as His children to go through hardships and troubled times?

Start Thinking:

Read Psalm 121:1-2. In hard times, why is it so important to trust God's character, commitment, care and providence?

Read Psalm 18:6 and Psalm 51:10. How does humility open the way for God's intervention and grace when life is hard?

Read Hebrews 10:25. Why is encouragement from other believers a vital part of God's purpose for us in hard times?

Read Romans 5:3-5. How does God work to change us in and through the challenges we face?

Start Praying and Doing:

Pray for God to work in you through hardships you're facing (or will face) so that you grow in faith, your heart is purified and you become stronger and more resilient in your walk with the Lord. Pray that you can "also have joy in your troubles" (Romans 5:3) as you realize how God is working in the midst of the difficulties.