

## **Different Different Faith in Trials**

### **TALK IT OVER**

#### **Key Scriptures**

*This letter is from Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ. I am writing to God's chosen people who are living as foreigners in the provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.* 1 Peter 1:1 NLT

*So be truly glad. There is wonderful joy ahead, even though you must endure many trials for a little while. These trials will show that your faith is genuine. ...* 1 Peter 1:6-7 NLT

#### **How does God use your trials?**

1. Trials reveal your faith.

*These trials will show that your faith is genuine. ...* 1 Peter 1:7 NLT

*"Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift all of you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers."* Luke 22:31-32 NIV

*Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.* James 1:2-4 NIV

2. Trials draw you closer to God.

*You love [God] even though you have never seen him. Though you do not see him now, you trust him; and you rejoice with a glorious, inexpressible joy. The reward for trusting him will be the salvation of your souls.* 1 Peter 1:8-9 NLT

#### **Let Pastor Craig lead your Small Group.**

- Watch the DVD video for week 1.

**Start talking.** Find a conversation starter for your group.

- Let's make sure everyone knows each other. Share your name, how long you've been part of this church, and something "different" about you.
- What really stuck with you from the message?

**Start thinking.** Ask a question to get your group thinking.

- Read 1 Peter 1:1. How can you identify as a foreigner, exile, stranger, or sojourner?
- Why do you think God doesn't miraculously keep you from experiencing any trials?

**Start sharing.** Choose a question to create openness.

- Think of a time when a trial revealed your faith. What kind of faith did it reveal: inherited faith, shallow faith, conditional faith, or genuine faith?
- Have you experienced a trial that drew you closer to God? What caused you to move closer to God instead of moving away from Him?
- What trial are you facing right now? How can you begin to trust God with it?

**Start praying.** Be bold and pray with power.

Heavenly Father, thank You for this group of friends. We ask You to grow in us a faith that can be trusted. Draw us closer to You, God. We give You our worries, and we commit to trust in You. Amen.

**Start doing.** Commit to a step and live it out this week.

- Start the *Different Bible Plan*: [www.go2.lc/different](http://www.go2.lc/different)
- Start each day by committing your worries and disappointments to God in prayer. Tell Him and show Him you trust Him.
- Talk with your family or close friends about what makes you different.

## ***Different*** **Different Values in an Unholy Culture**

### **TALK IT OVER**

#### **Key Scripture**

*Therefore, with minds that are alert and fully sober, set your hope on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming. As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy." Since you call on a Father who judges each person's work impartially, live out your time as foreigners here in reverent fear. For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake. Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God.*

1 Peter 1:13-21 NIV

#### **Why Holy?**

- God asks us to be holy because He is holy.
- *Hágios*—holy, set apart, different, pure.
- We're not talking about **behavior modification**. We're talking about **spiritual transformation**.
- Living holy isn't the path to knowing Christ. Knowing Christ is the path to living Holy.

#### **Let Pastor Craig lead your Small Group.**

- Watch the DVD video for week 2.

#### **Start talking.** Find a conversation starter for your group.

- What did you do in your childhood just to fit in?
- What's something Pastor Craig said that keeps replaying in your mind?

#### **Start thinking.** Ask a question to get your group thinking.

- How would you describe the most important ways God asks us to be different?
- Why do you think it's so easy to start looking like the rest of the world?

#### **Start sharing.** Choose a question to create openness.

- What are some of the most obvious ways you're different from the world?
- What are three areas you most often find yourself trying to fit in?
- Describe a time you put your happiness above God's call for you to be different. How'd it turn out?
- What's one way you know God is asking you to be different?

#### **Start praying.** Be bold and pray with power.

God, You are holy. We want to be more like You. We invite you to look deep inside our lives and show us what we can change. Jesus, thank You for being with us and for being worth it. Amen.

#### **Start doing.** Commit to a step and live it out this week.

- Read 1 Peter with the *Different* Bible Plan: [www.go2.lc/different](http://www.go2.lc/different)
- Tell your group or someone in your group at least one thing you're going to stop so you can live differently.
- Being different isn't just subtraction—it's also addition. What good, godly things can you add to your week?

## **Different** **Different Calling in a Dark World**

### **TALK IT OVER**

#### **Key Scripture**

*... for you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God's very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for **he called** you out of the darkness into his wonderful light. ... Dear friends, I warn you as "temporary residents and foreigners" to keep away from worldly desires that wage war against your very souls. Be careful to live properly among your unbelieving neighbors. Then even if they accuse you of doing wrong, they will see your honorable behavior, and they will give honor to God when he judges the world.*  
1 Peter 2:9, 11-12 NLT

*It is God's will that your honorable lives should silence those ignorant people who make foolish accusations against you.*  
1 Peter 2:15 NLT

*For God **called you** to do good, even if it means suffering, just as Christ suffered for you. He is your example, and you must follow in his steps. He never sinned, nor ever deceived anyone. He did not retaliate when he was insulted, nor threaten revenge when he suffered. He left his case in the hands of God, who always judges fairly. He personally carried our sins in his body on the cross so that we can be dead to sin and live for what is right. ...*  
1 Peter 2:21-24 NLT

*Don't repay evil for evil. Don't retaliate with insults when people insult you. Instead, pay them back with a blessing. That is what God has **called you to do**, and he will grant you his blessing.*  
1 Peter 3:9 NLT

#### **Let Pastor Craig lead your Small Group.**

- Watch the DVD video for week 3.

#### **Start talking.** Find a conversation starter for your group.

- Pastor Craig joked about being called to safety patrol. What did you want to be when you grew up?
- Who is someone you think of when you think of what it means to be a Christian?

#### **Start thinking.** Ask a question to get your group thinking.

- Pastor Craig said the *who* comes before the *do*. Why do you think this is so important?
- Read 1 Peter 2:9-12. What message does my life, as-is, send to people around me?

#### **Start sharing.** Choose a question to create openness.

- In what ways do you struggle to see yourself as God sees you.
- What are you already doing that not just tells, but shows people God's goodness?
- What can you do differently to lead more people to Jesus?
- Who do you need to practice the 1 Peter 3:9 principle with most?

#### **Start praying.** Be bold and pray with power.

God, You've given us an incredible identity. We are chosen by You to be holy, part of Your royal family of priests. You called us to be good and to do good. So, we're asking You to give us the opportunities and the bravery to live out our callings this week. Amen.

#### **Start doing.** Commit to a step and live it out this week.

- Commit to live like you're a "pastor on call" this week.
- What's one thing you'll follow through with tomorrow in order to show God's love?
- Read 1 Peter with the *Different* Bible Plan: [www.go2.lc/different](http://www.go2.lc/different)

## **Different Different Perspective in Persecution**

### **TALK IT OVER**

#### **Key Scripture**

*“If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first ... If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. John 15:18, 20*

*Dear friends, don't be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you. Instead, be very glad—for these trials make you partners with Christ in his suffering, so that you will have the wonderful joy of seeing his glory when it is revealed to all the world. 1 Peter 4:12-13 NLT*

*So if you are suffering in a manner that pleases God, keep on doing what is right, and trust your lives to the God who created you, for he will never fail you. 1 Peter 4:19*

*...“God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” So humble yourselves under the mighty power of God, and at the right time he will lift you up in honor. Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you. 1 Peter 5:5-7*

**Comfort Cycle:** Pursue Comfort à Avoid Opposition à Faith Weakens à Life's Empty

**Bold Cycle:** Live Boldly à Face Opposition à Faith Strengthens à Closer to Christ

#### **Let Pastor Craig lead your Small Group.**

- Watch the DVD video for week 4.

**Start talking.** Find a conversation starter for your group.

- What's your worst plumbing story?
- What are some silly things you've called persecution?

**Start thinking.** Ask a question to get your group thinking.

- Pastor Craig said, “Don't worry when you're persecuted for your faith, worry when you're not.” How does this make you feel? Explain.
- Read John 15:18-20. How are Jesus' words different from your perspective of life?

**Start sharing.** Choose a question to create openness.

- Have you experienced any level of persecution for your faith? Is there anything you wish you did differently?
- Remember Pastor Craig's two slides? Which looks more like your daily life? Seeking comfort or living boldly?
- What would change about your life if you began to expect persecution as a part of following Christ?
- Read 1 Peter 5:5-7. What are you worried about right now? How can you live out this Scripture and give your worries to God?

**Start praying.** Be bold and pray with power.

God, forgive us for all the time we've spent seeking comfort instead of boldly seeking You. You are all we need. Thank You for Your constant grace. We give our worries and cares to You. Amen.

**Start doing.** Commit to a step and live it out this week.

- Pick one of your biggest worries and ask God daily for His help. Then, trust Him to care for you in this way.
- Set a regular reminder for yourself to live out the bold cycle, not the comfort cycle.