

Journey CHURCH

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How to Get Through What You're Going Through Leader Guide Session 7: Service – Never Waste Your Pain

Last week, Kay taught about finding treasure in the darkness and referenced Isaiah 45:3: “*I will give you hidden treasures, riches stored in secret places, so that you may know that I am the Lord, the God of Israel, who summons you by name*” (NIV) What treasures has God revealed to you during this study? How has this changed your perception of suffering?

Key Verse: Galatians 3:4 (CEV)

Have you gone through all of this for nothing? Is it all really for nothing?

5 Purposes for Your Life

Worship – Know and Love God

Fellowship – Learn to Love Others

Discipleship - Become Like Christ

Ministry – Serve God by Serving Other People

Mission – Share Your Life Message

5 Ways Pain Can Be Used for Good

1. I can use my pain to draw closer to God.

We were really crushed and overwhelmed ... and saw how powerless we were to help ourselves; but that was good, for then we put everything into the hands of God, who alone could save us ... And he did help us.

2 Corinthians 1:8b-10a (TLB)

I am glad... not because it hurt you but because the pain turned you to God.

2 Corinthians 7:9a (TLB)

2. I can use my pain to draw closer to others.

By helping each other with your troubles, you truly obey the law of Christ.

Galatians 6:2 (NVC)

3. I can use my pain to become more like Jesus.

Sometimes it takes a painful experience to make us change our ways.

Proverbs 20:30 (GNT)

Even though Jesus was God's Son, he learned obedience from the things he suffered.

Hebrews 5:8 (NLT)

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Galatians 3:4 (CEV)

Suffering made Jesus perfect, and now he can save forever all who obey him.

Hebrews 5:9 (CEV)

Isn't it wonderful all the ways in which this distress has goaded you closer to God? You're more alive, more concerned, more sensitive, more reverent, more human, more passionate, more responsible. Looked at from any angle, you've come out of this with purity of heart.

2 Corinthians 7:11 (MSG)

We are pressed on every side by troubles, but we are not crushed. We are perplexed, but not driven to despair. We are hunted down, but never abandoned by God. We get knocked down, but we are not destroyed. Through suffering, our bodies continue to share in the death of Jesus so that the life of Jesus may also be seen in our bodies.

2 Corinthians 4:8-10 (NLT)

4. I can use my pain to help others.

He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us. For the more we suffer for Christ, the more God will shower us with his comfort through Christ. Even when we are weighed down with troubles, it is for your comfort and salvation! For when we ourselves are comforted, we will certainly comfort you. Then you can patiently endure the same things we suffer.

2 Corinthians 1:4-6 (NLT)

5. I can use my pain to witness to the world.

Your deepest life message will come out of your deepest pain.

Discussion Questions:

1. How can people intentionally cultivate deeper relationships – Whether in a marriage, friendship, or fellowship group – That will allow them to become vulnerable by openly sharing their feelings and experiences? Share your ideas or real – life experiences with the group.
2. Our pain can be used to reach out and comfort others. Why would sharing our weaknesses be more effective in connecting with others than sharing our accomplishments?

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3. Winning in life requires resilience: the ability to bounce back from our problems and pains by seeing God's purpose in them. Describe an example from your life that God has used to cultivate your purpose.
4. Pastor Rick talked about four levels of fellowship: sharing, studying, serving, and suffering. Openly talk about what level your group is in now and how you could make progress toward the next level of fellowship. Share ideas and encourage everyone to contribute to the conversation.
5. God's #1 purpose in your life is to make you like Jesus. In what ways have you become more like Jesus during this study? In your thought life? Your prayer life? How you relate to others? Share your discoveries with the group.

Putting it into Practice:

Think of one of the most painful experience in your life. Then go back over this lesson and look how God could use that situation in each of the five ways Pastor Rick shared. Is one or more of these difficult for you to explore? Do you know why?

Prayer Direction:

One person can lead this prayer for the group, or participants can pray this to themselves silently:

Jesus Christ, use the pain in my life to draw me closer to you, so I can learn how to really love and draw closer to others. Please use the pain in my life to make me more like you. I don't want to waste my pain. I want to use it to serve others, and glorify you. My greatest desire is that you would use the pain in my life as a witness to the world that you can be counted on, that you are a good God, and that you provide strength in every situation – even in the most difficult of times. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.