



ANXIOUS FOR NOTHING

Praise in the Pain Leader Guide – May 24, 2020

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! ⁵ Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. (Philippians 4:4-5 NIV)

ICE BREAKER

What is the greatest pain you've experienced so far in your life? (Could be physical, emotional, mental, spiritual, relational, etc.)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1) Paul's words in Philippians 4:4 can seem somewhat ironic since he was writing them while in prison. Andrew gave us three reasons Paul was able to praise God (and encourage us as well) in the midst of pain. What were they? What does it look like to apply them in our life?

- He had the right perspective -> we see everything we face through the lens of eternity. See 2 Corinthians 4:16-18.
 - Paul knew he would face all kinds of trials on this earth, but he knew the glory waiting on him because of the work Jesus accomplished
 - See Paul's response in Acts 16:25 and Philippians 1:12-13
- He realized pain serves a purpose -> whatever God doesn't remove, He will always use.
 - Paul knew that God works all things (good, bad, ugly, etc.) for our good – see Romans 8:28
 - Paul knew what James (1/2 bro of Jesus) wrote in James 1:2-4 to be true – pain is a prerequisite for spiritual growth
- He knew the presence of God was near -> the ultimate reason we are able to praise God in the midst of pain is because God is with us in it.
 - He promises not only to never leave or forsake us, but to specifically be with us in the midst of hard – see also Psalm 34:17-18

2) Many times, God's greatest work occurs in our darkest moments. How have you seen this play true in your life or someone close to you?

- Leaders share how you've grown in this way or how you've seen others grow because of pain/trials

3) Paul was very quick to point out in verse 5 that our gentleness needs to be evident to all. If we're all honest, this can be really tough when tensions are running high and tempers are short. How can you be sure to be gentle to those around you this week?

- Guarding our tongue – especially with those closest to us
- Making sure in all circumstances that we are responding and not reacting – especially if tensions are running high

- Showing a little extra grace/patience – especially in the grocery store check-out line where it seems everyone loses their mind :)
- Being kind to everyone who deals with COVID-19 differently than you – no matter if you're a conspiracy theorist or fearing for your life, we're in this together

4) Andrew shared that God never promises to change our circumstance, but that He will always use it to change us. How might God be using your current circumstance to grow your faith?

- What He doesn't remove, He will always use. What are you asking God to remove in your life right now? What lesson could He be trying to teach you? How might He be trying to remind you of how dependent you are upon Him?

PERSONAL REFLECTION

1) How can you personally begin to see your pain through the right perspective this week?

2) Who can you reach out to this week to support (and sit with) in the midst of their pain?