

LG Questions

Winter 24 Wk 5

Big Idea: When we do not “feel” the smile of God on our life we must pay attention, stay hungry, and remain patient while we seek His face.



Read Psalm 10:1

O Lord, why do you stand so far away? Why do you hide when I am in trouble?

- 1. In this Psalm David feels like God is far off and absent. Can you share a time when God felt gone (perhaps it is now)? What were the circumstances? How long did the feeling of His “absence” last? Did you learn anything particular during that time?***

Read Job 7:11

So I won't keep quiet. When I'm suffering greatly, I'll speak out. When my spirit is bitter, I'll tell you how unhappy I am.

- 2. When God feels distant it helps to be real with Him in prayer and express our true emotions. Are there any emotions that you have trouble expressing to God? Why or why not?***

Read Psalm 78: 6-7

so that a future generation—children yet to be born—might know.

They were to rise and tell their children so that they might put their confidence in God and not forget God's works, but keep his commands.

- 3. Recalling God's consistency and remembering all He has done for us helps us remain patient when we do not feel His presence. Share several instances from 2023 when God came through for you or someone you love and demonstrated His faithfulness. How does remembering His past work give us faith and hope for present and future challenges?***

Read James 4:8a

Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.

Read Hosea 10:12

Sow righteousness for yourselves and reap faithful love; break up your unplowed ground. It is time to seek the LORD until he comes and sends righteousness on you like the rain.

4. ***God gives us promises, not explanations. He might not always reveal why we do not sense His presence, but He does promise that if we will draw near to him and seek Him He will draw near to us and pour out His righteousness in due time.***

Share your thoughts on these two promises:

1. ***“Draw near to Him”- In your opinion, what does it mean to draw near to God? What actions must you take to draw near to the Lord? What is promised if we draw near to Him?***
2. ***“Seek the Lord UNTIL”- In your opinion, how does this phrase communicate the importance of persistence in seeking the Lord? Does it seem to communicate a sense of desperation? Why or why not? What is promised if we remain persistent in seeking Him?***

Read Hebrews 12:2

Looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

5. ***If not careful, Christianity can over-focus on the glory of victory (the Trophies) and ignore the blood, sweat, and tears of adversity and sacrifice that led to victory. As Christians we can confuse adversity as God's “absence” and fail to see that the adversity is the road God is using to lead us to victory. Jesus himself gained the victory of the resurrection through the adversity of the cross. How does focusing on Christ's adversity help us get through our own adversity? As we face adversity in our faith, to what can we look forward?***

Prayer:

Spend time asking God that He would use times of perceived distance from Him to fortify our need for Him and to increase our hunger for His presence. Allow each person to ask this from God in their own words.