

Expecting and Embracing Trouble

Texts: John 16:33; Philippians 3:7-14; James 1:2-6

OPEN

By now, you have gotten to know those in your group. You have received others sharing and have probably shared yourself as well. In other words, the ice has been broken and we can be real with one another.

On a scale of 1-10, how “troubled” have you felt these last few days/weeks?

On a scale of 1-10 (1 = not so well, 10 = doing very well), how well are you embracing and navigating these troubles?

Do you believe life is supposed to be difficult? Explain your answer.

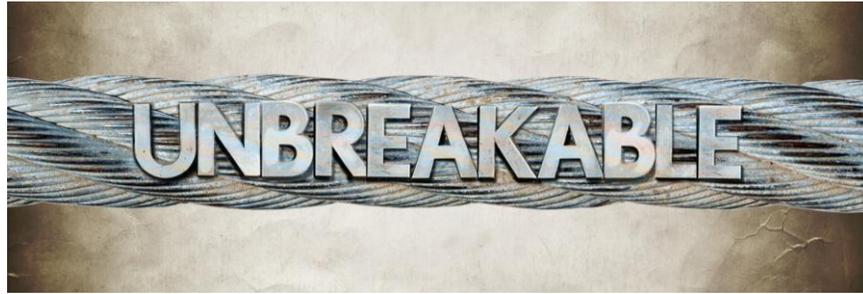
DISCUSS

How has God’s grace met you in times of trouble in the past? Where are you seeing or experiencing God’s grace in your life now?

C.S. Lewis says on this subject: “[The atheists] say of temporal suffering, ‘No future bliss can make up for it.’” But this is only because their minds cannot yet imagine the wonder, “that Heaven, once attained, will work backwards and turn even that agony into a glory.”ⁱ

- How do you respond to this quotation?
- What do John 16:33 and Romans 8:35-39 have to say about troubles? How do you receive these words?

Read and discuss James 1:2-6. Discuss what you see as the key(s) to moving from bitter to better in life’s troubles? How can a person (you) come to not just accept, but embrace troubles?



YOUR NEXT STEP...

In the Unbreakable Series, there are SIX STRANDS God calls us to weave intentionally into our lives with one another. God calls us to commit deeply to each other, to encourage one another, to stop-look-and-listen to each other, to spend time together, to seek communion with him together, and to both expect the pain and embrace the potential of life's troubles together.

Which of these strands most resonated with you? Which strands need strengthened and applied more deeply in your life?

Spend time this week reflecting where we have been the last six weeks. Consider journaling what you have learned, where you have been challenged, and how you plan to respond in the days to come.

ⁱ C.S. Lewis, *The Great Divorce* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1946), p. 64.