



CONNECT - HOW DOES THIS TOPIC RELATE TO US?

Choose 1 or 2 questions to get your discussion started.

1. Share your experience with taking a moral inventory this past week. What did you learn?
2. Do you normally view life's trials as a disruption or an enrichment to your spiritual progress?
3. What hinders you from an awareness of God's presence in your office/work/home? How have you seen God active in your daily life lately?
4. Share a time in which the Holy Spirit prompted you to engage a spiritual discipline (e.g. prayer, study, etc.) that helped you deal with a situation later in your day or week.

ENGAGE - WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH US?

Read the following two passages considering the idea of facing everyday trials.

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. - Colossians 3:23-24

A person can do nothing better than to eat and drink and find satisfaction in their own toil. This too, I see, is from the hand of God. - Ecclesiastes 2:24

1. How would your attitude toward your work change if you considered it as service to God?
2. Practically speaking, how do you see your work as coming from the hand of God?
3. What do you find satisfying in your work?
4. How do the challenges you face at work inform your spiritual growth?

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. If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. - James 1:2-5

1. According to James, why are trials a cause for joy?
2. What does it mean to be "mature and complete, not lacking anything"?
3. How does perseverance help bring this about?

APPLY - HOW CAN THIS CHANGE OUR LIVES?

1. What are some practical steps you can take to be centered on Christ this week?
2. Identify an activity that you do every day (e.g. making coffee, commuting, etc.). How can you invite God into that activity with you?
3. Think about a current problem in your workplace. How could God use this for your spiritual growth?
4. In what area of your life could you most use God's wisdom right now?

ACTION STEP

Identify one step that you can take in an area of your life where you find it challenging to be aware of God's presence.

PRAYER

Invite everyone in the group to spend a couple minutes in silence to think about the everyday trials that they faced today. Where was God in those moments? Close your time together by having one person pray these words for the group:

Loving and faithful God, thank you for the many ways in which you are always at work around us and in us. Give us ears to hear and eyes to see where you are each and every moment so that we consider it pure joy when we face trials, because we know that the testing of our faith produces perseverance. We must let perseverance finish its work so that we may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. Amen.

GOING DEEPER - FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY

May the favor of the Lord our God rest on us; establish the work of our hands for us—yes, establish the work of our hands.
- Psalm 90:17

- What kind of work do you do? How has God established your work? How is God part of your work?

The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. - Genesis 2:15

- Before the fall, God placed the man in the Garden of Eden where everything was provided. Why did God assign work to the man? What does the timing and purpose of this decision imply for us?

In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. - 1 Peter 1:6-7

- The early church was a persecuted minority culture in a majority pagan culture led by Rome. What perspective do these verses give on the purpose of trials? When you consider the trials in your life, how have you found this to be true?

Recommended Resources A. Read *The Practice of the Presence of God* by Brother Lawrence. B. Read *Liturgy of the Ordinary* by Tish Harrison Warren. C. Watch The Bible Project's video on Holy Spirit - [thebibleproject.com/explore/holy-spirit/](https://www.thebibleproject.com/explore/holy-spirit/)