



Tough Times: Find God | May 27, 2020

Discussion Guide

The Scoop

You can find a survival kit for almost anything and they are usually helpful; but surprisingly, the faith "survival kit" often gets blamed for hard times.

Key Verses

John 15:4 (NIV)

"Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me."

Discussion

In tough times we typically want a simple answer. It's why we have overused the "survival kit" concept. There are wilderness survival kit, wedding survival kit, parenting survival kits, emergency vehicle survival kit, starting a business survival kit, and the list goes on. Now that we can search the internet for answers to any of life's biggest questions and find the survival kit for whatever ails us, we trust the so called internet experts more than our faith.

1. Can you think of any "survival kits" or "how-to" guides that you have used before? Was it helpful or not?
2. How have you used guides, books, and advice to help yourself and others out of hard times? Think in terms of your career, personal life, friends, or even faith.

Because a simple internet search is so easy, we tend to turn these pre-packaged survival kit like answers before looking to God. It's no secret that we will face tough times. The difference in surviving and thriving is how we respond in tough times. When we look for simple answers to complex life issues, we find ourselves disappointed. We might even blame the survival kit for "not working." If we apply the same thinking to our relationship with God, we might find ourselves blaming Him for our difficulty instead of looking to Him for the answers.

3. What is your typical response to adversity? Do you dig in and try to solve it or do you pull away and avoid difficulty?
4. Can you think of a time where you yelled at God, were mad at him, or blamed him for your circumstances? Can you think of a time where you pulled away from God in tough times?

In John 15:4, Jesus tells us that, "No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me." In this analogy, it is important to realize that we need God to survive. It is through him that we get our strength and are able to "bear fruit." Sometimes difficulty helps us bear more fruit in the long run. If we expect to become stronger without the difficulty of growth, we may not bear the fruit we desire. If we remove ourselves from God altogether, the difficulty may overwhelm us. Regardless of your natural tendencies when facing tough times, staying connected to God is the true secret to survival.

5. Do you have any examples of when your faith and prayers have steered you toward great things? how did you rely on God in those moments?
6. How would your life change if you engaged with God every day? What would it take for you to find God in times of celebration and times of difficulty?

What's Next?

As you look at the difficult things in your life this week, invite God into those spaces. Instead of pushing him away, use God as your survival kit and trust in him to help you overcome your personal struggles. He may not give you the perfect 10 step survival plan, but He will give you life so that you can bear fruit. Check out our 5-minute faith journal for some guided prompts on the way we think about our daily lives in connection with our faith.

You can find a template of our 5-minute faith journal at faithinfive.com to further engage your goals and connect them with your faith.