



Adversity: Fish Out of Water | July 13, 2016

Discussion Guide

The Scoop

Adversity helps shift the lens through which we see the world and allows us the opportunity to better understand goodness.

Key Verse

James 1:2-4 (MSG)

Consider it a sheer gift, friends, when tests and challenges come at you from all sides. You know that under pressure, your faith-life is forced into the open and shows its true colors. So don't try to get out of anything prematurely. Let it do its work so you become mature and well-developed, not deficient in any way.

Discussion

We all have a lens through which we see the world. It is shaped by experiences, upbringing, faith, gender, race, etc. As long as everything goes according to that lens life is “business as usual.” However, when adversity hits in any form we are forced to examine how we see and experience the world.

1. What types of things do you think have shaped your lens?
2. What is one thing in your life that has caused you to examine your lens, good or bad?

The good thing about adjusting our lens is that we become more aware. When bad causes us to see that not all is perfect we do become more aware of the good that was or could be. When difficulties strike our lives we also become more capable of understanding others.

3. What is one thing in the past year that has made you aware of goodness in this world?
4. What is one difficulty in your life that has made you more understanding or more empathetic toward others?

Most of us wouldn't ask for or invite difficulties into our lives, but when they do happen (and they will) we can alter our perspective on how they affect us, and shift our perspective toward the potential for impacting other lives.

5. What is one tragedy, challenge, or difficulty in your life that could be used to help others? What kind of impact could that have?

What's Next?

James suggests that difficulty helps us grow. This week and in the coming weeks of our adversity series, consider how previous or current difficulty can be redeemed by keeping the following truths in mind:

1. We become more aware of goodness (without bad we cannot fully understand good).
2. We become more aware of and more understanding of others.
3. We grow to a point that fear begins to dissolve. We can weather more storms and use our experience to impact the world for good.