



Seasons: Winter Struggle | November 11, 2020

Discussion Guide

The Scoop

Most people have a favorite season, and for most people winter is not one of them. Winter is often seen as a struggle.

Key Verses

Proverbs 25:13 (NET)

Like the cold of snow in the time of harvest, so is a faithful messenger to those who send him, for he refreshes the heart of his masters.

Discussion

Winter is a season marked largely by struggle; one that is marked by long, cold, and somewhat dreary times between fall and spring. In many ways, winter can be a metaphor for the lulls and hardships that we face in our own lives. Illness, loneliness, relational hardship, addiction, and loss can all feel like this dark and dreary season of life. As a season of life, sometimes winter stays longer than we would like.

1. Compare and contrast the seasons of winter and summer. What characterizes each?
2. Can you recall a time when you experienced a winter-like season of life?

Many Christians are quick to offer encouragement in moments of hardship in ways that invalidate real hardships of the human experience. Unfortunately, we often don't create space for winter in our faith or make room for those who are experiencing winter moments. While hope has its place, Jesus was not quick to skip over hardship or promise sunshine free of winter seasons. In fact, Jesus seems to suggest that we bring our brokenness to the table when we sit with Him.

3. Have you ever felt alone in your difficulties and struggles? Why do you think that was?
4. Looking back, were there people that showed up for you in times of struggle? What other things helped you make it through?

In the Bible, Proverbs 25:13 tells us that, "Like the cold of snow in the time of harvest, so is a faithful messenger to those who send him, for he refreshes the heart of his masters." It seems as though, even in difficult times, God desires us to be messengers in tough times. It is refreshing to experience someone's winter. It is refreshing to extend empathy in the cold times. While God ultimately provides much hope in our lives, he also invites us to share our winter seasons with others, as well as, show up with a blanket in the midst of other's hardships.

5. In what ways have your hardships made you more aware of, available to, and empathetic toward others?
6. Can you think of anyone who may be experiencing winter in their lives? In what ways might you show up for them in the midst of the hardship?

What's Next?

This week examine your faith and explore whether or not you have made room for winter seasons in your own life and the lives of others. If you are in a moment of hardship; it is okay, and you are not alone. Additionally, be on look out for people that are struggling and meet them in their "winter." Be God's messenger with refreshing authenticity that includes even our winter seasons.

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.