



Adversity: Start A New Trend | July 27, 2016

Discussion Guide

The Scoop

In the face of adversity God asks us to show up. We are part of God's plan for healing in this world.

Key Verse

1 Thessalonians 5:13-15 (MSG)

Get along among yourselves, each of you doing your part. Our counsel is that you warn the freeloaders to get a move on. Gently encourage the stragglers, and reach out for the exhausted, pulling them to their feet. Be patient with each person, attentive to individual needs. And be careful that when you get on each other's nerves you don't snap at each other. Look for the best in each other, and always do your best to bring it out.

Discussion

It seems there are two pervasive reactions in this world when it comes to tragedy: 1. Come quickly, Jesus, and 2. God doesn't care. Some of us just want to throw our hands up and have God swoop in to save those that believe. Others of us start to see all the tragedy and believe God has forsaken us.

1. Have you ever felt like the world was too far gone or that God didn't care and had given up on us?
2. Which camp do you find yourself in most often?

The problem with these two assumptions is that it eliminates our role and responsibility in the matter. God clearly cared enough about this world to send Jesus here. He also seems to want us to be part of the solution.

3. Where have you seen examples of God through others?
4. How do you think you could be part of the solution to difficult matters in this world?

What if we started a new trend of suspending judgment, extending understanding, and getting more involved in helping others. If we start to believe and behave as if God doesn't care or that things are so bad there is no coming back, we perpetuate an unbelieving world's assumptions about God or lack thereof.

5. The verses from 1 Thessalonians reference doing our part to "warn the freeloaders," "encourage the stragglers," "reach out to the exhausted," "be patient with each person," and "look for the best in each other." What does this mean when applied to real life? What things need to change to live more like the verse?

What's Next?

It's so easy to look around and expect or hope that someone else will take care of it, especially when that someone is God. Doing so reduces God's plan and eliminates the richness we experience by playing our part in His plan. This week and in the following weeks, consider how you could adjust your assumptions and behavior to help this world see that God is alive and well, and that He has asked us to be the hope for humanity.