



Eat, Drink, And Be Thankful: Drink | November 28, 2018

Discussion Guide

The Scoop

What do you do when thanksgiving is hard, because your circumstances aren't very thankworthy? Read more about engaging your faith during difficult times below.

Key Verses

John 7:37-38 (NIV)

"On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, 'Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.' By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive."

Discussion

For many people, the holidays can actually be very difficult. Instead of joy and celebration, some are sharply reminded this time of year of pain, loss and broken relationships. So much so, that there's actually a support program that many churches offer called, "Surviving the Holidays." Holidays, good or bad, are pinpoints on our calendar that remind us of something we've been through or will remind us in the future of something we are going through currently.

1. How would you describe your mental and emotional state as you approach the holidays this year?
2. Is there something painful or difficult about the holiday season for you? Is it hopeful to know that you're not the only one?

It can often be difficult to engage our faith, especially with a posture of thankfulness, when our circumstances are not very thankworthy. Many of us have a little voice in our head that tries to convince us that God is being silent in difficult or painful times. In these seasons, however, God reminds us in scripture that we don't have to go through it alone.

3. Think of a time in your life when engaging you faith was particularly difficult because of your circumstances. Why is it so easy to run from God in these seasons?
4. Do you believe that God wants us to be close to him during these times? Why or why not?

In John 7:37-38, we read about Jesus teaching at a Jewish festival. Many of the people listening to him are confused about who he is. There is argument and disagreement as Jesus tries to explain his identity and the gift of the Holy Spirit for those who believe he is who he says he is. In this passage Jesus tells us to come near, even and especially when we are thirsty and longing. He tells us that when we go to him, we receive the gift of living water.

5. Have you ever experienced the tender nearness of Jesus in a season where you were thirsty?
6. What do you think "living water" means? Why is it a gift?

What's Next?

In this season, we experience holiday after holiday. And instead of simply going through the motions, what if this year you were more aware that the holidays aren't always easy for everyone? If you're not hurting, the chances are that someone around you might be. The promise that Jesus offers to us is that we are not alone, even when we feel like it. Instead of running away from our faith when things are difficult, Jesus asks us to come to him for a drink of living water.

This week, as you live out your faith and survive the holidays, feel encouraged by the fact that you (or someone close to you who is struggling) don't have to walk through the holidays alone. God wants to be in your life and for you to invite him into your desperate conversations and pleas for help.