

SERIES BIG IDEA

During the toughest, most tragic moments of our lives, God is with us, God loves us, and God wants to use our most trying struggles to develop a living faith within us that can withstand any circumstance.

BIG IDEA

When our faith is tested, and God seems silent, rather than chasing down another way to peace, trust that the one who has been faithful will, once again, be faithful to the end.

SCRIPTURE

Exodus 31:18-32:8; John 16:33; Psalm 23

ICE BREAKER

As a child, did you have a favorite stuffed animal, toy, or blanket? Why was it your favorite?

OPENING THOUGHT

At some point in life, we experience a season in our faith journey when life is hard, and it challenges our faith. We may experience cancer, divorce, unemployment, depression, financial trouble, relational struggles, or death. In these seasons, we may ask, 'God, where are you?' Jesus said in John 16:33, "In this world, you will have troubles, but take heart, I have overcome the world!" So it's not a matter of if you have trouble, but when you will have trouble! What does it mean for us that Jesus has overcome the world?

1. Read Exodus 31:18 – 32:8. What stands out to you?
2. The Israelites weren't looking for a substitute for God; they just wanted something to add on to God. They may have been tired of the silence. What things are you most tempted to grab hold of to help deaden the pain during times of suffering?

LIFE APPLICATION

3. When have you had a hard season where it felt like God was missing? If this is your current season, what do you hope that God might be doing during this time, even though God seems silent or distant?
4. What has it been like for you to sit in the discomfort of your trials and trouble? As you feel comfortable, share with the group.
5. What do you need to do differently because of what we have talked about tonight? What do you sense God might be challenging you to think/do/believe differently?
6. Take a moment to identify someone you know who may be having a difficult time. What is a simple way that you can encourage them and help them get through what they are going through?

CLOSING

End your group time by reading the words from Psalm 23 together and allow it to be your closing prayer.