

HOW DOES GOD HELP ME IN TIMES OF TROUBLE?

*I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. **In this world you will have trouble.** But take heart! I have overcome the world. JOHN 16:33 TNIV*

In the world you have **tribulation** and **trials** and **distress** and **frustration**- AMP
You will **continue to experience difficulties**- MESSAGE
Many **trials** and **sorrows**- NLT
While you are in the world, you will have to **suffer**- CEV

GOD HAS SENT ME HIS HOLY SPIRIT

*And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another **Helper**, to be with you forever, even the **Spirit of truth**, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. JOHN 14:16-17 ESV*

1. THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL TEACH ME **THE TRUTH**

- God loves me

DISCUSSION: How have you experienced love from God in the midst of trials? If you don't feel you have, where have you potentially missed an opportunity to experience God's love when life has been difficult?

Long ago the Lord said to Israel: "I have loved you, my people, with an everlasting love. With unfailing love I have drawn you to myself. JEREMIAH 31:3 NLT

- God has a plan for me

Though I am surrounded by troubles, you will protect me from the anger of my enemies. You reach out your hand, and the power of your right hand saves me. The Lord will work out his plans for my life—for your faithful love, O Lord, endures forever. PSALM 138:7-8 NLT

DISCUSSION: In what way are you opening yourself to understand God's plan for you? How does that discipline transfer over into times of troubles? In what way do you seek God when things get tough?

- God Wins!

*I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. **In this world you will have trouble.** But take heart! I have overcome the world. JOHN 16:33 TNIV*

I tell you the truth, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy. A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world. So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy. JOHN 16:20-22 NIV

PRAYER PROJECT (appx. 20 minutes): Take a 3-5 minutes in order to slow down you mind and heart. When you are ready, begin to think back to a time in the past where you experienced real trouble in your life. Recall the details of the circumstances by asking some questions like, “What happened? For how long did it last? Who was involved? How did it come about? How did you respond?”

Now take 5-10 minutes and begin a conversation with God that talks about the way in which you responded to Him in the midst of this troubling time. Ask some questions like, “In the midst of that trouble, did I press into God’s plan? How did I hold onto God? Did I hold onto God? Did I even want to hold onto God? What motivated me to respond the way I did? Did I experience peace and joy in the midst of that moment? How did that experience move me closer to God in my relationship with Him?”

Now take 5-10 minutes and begin to ask the Lord to speak to you about what he wants to say regarding the way in which you responded to Him in the midst of that troubling time. Listen intently. Be mindful of any thoughts and or feelings that arise inside of you. Evaluate those thoughts and or feelings in light of the way in which God desires to conform you to the image of Jesus Christ.

When you are done, rejoin your group and share with them your experience of God in your prayer time. Listen to their input. Have them pray with you and bless you that God would use your prayer time and future reflection time in order to form you more closely into the image of Jesus Christ.

2. THE HOLY SPIRIT OFFERS DIRECTION IN THE MIDST OF CHAOS AND SUFFERING

*When the Spirit of truth comes, he will **guide** you into all truth. He will not speak on his own but will tell you what he has heard. He will tell you about the future. JOHN 16:13 NLT*

*...the LORD will continually **guide** you...ISAIAH 58:11 NASB*

DISCUSSION: How do you open yourself to be guided by the Holy Spirit? What disciplines do you use in order to allow yourself to be lead by Him? How do those disciplines come into play when life becomes really difficult?

3. THE HOLY SPIRIT DIRECTS MY ATTENTION

- Off my problem and onto Jesus

*But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness **about me**. JOHN 15:26 ESV*

If the people of this world hate you, just remember that they hated me first. JOHN 15:18 CEV

- Off my thoughts and onto His

*But the **Helper**, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. JOHN 14:26 ESV*

*It is the **Spirit** who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. JOHN 6:63 ESV*

*BLESSED (HAPPY, fortunate, prosperous, and enviable) is the man who walks and lives not in the counsel of the ungodly [following their advice, their plans and purposes], nor stands [submissive and inactive] in the path where sinners walk, nor sits down [to relax and rest] where the scornful [and the mockers] gather. **But his delight and desire are in the law of the Lord**, and on His law (the precepts, the instructions, the teachings of God) **he habitually meditates** (ponders and studies) by day and by night. PSALM 1:1-2 AMPLIFIED*

- Towards a community that cares

*So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria enjoyed peace, being built up; and going on in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy **Spirit**, it continued to increase. ACTS 9:31 NAS*

*For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one **Spirit**. 1 CORINTHIANS 12:13 NASB*

*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy **Spirit**, be with you all. 2 CORINTHIANS 13:14 NASB*

*In whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the **Spirit**. Ephesians 2:22 NASB*

DISCUSSION: In what way will you allow the Holy Spirit to direct your attention towards God? What disciplines and or movements will you make so that you will allow the Holy Spirit to have a greater influence on you and your thoughts?