

DISCIPLESHIP

You were created
to become like Christ



SESSION 4

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CATCHING UP

- How are the plans coming for your group's Living on Purpose Service Project that you discussed in your last session?

MEMORY VERSE

"In all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."

Romans 8:28 (NIV)



Watch the video lesson now and follow along in your outline.

DISCIPLESHIP

You were created to become like Christ

God doesn't just want you to know about Jesus Christ, he wants you to become like Jesus Christ. This has been God's plan for you since the beginning of time.

"From the very beginning God decided that those who came to him – and all along he knew who would – should become like his Son."

Romans 8:29 (TLB)

"God wants us to grow up... like Christ in everything."

Ephesians 4:15 (MSG)

Three Tools God Uses to Help Us Grow

"In all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."

Romans 8:28 (NIV)

- God uses _____ to teach us to _____ him.

Trials are situations designed by God to draw us closer to him. They stretch our faith and grow our character.

Problems and trials... are good for us – they help us learn to be patient.

"And patience develops strength of character in us and helps us trust God more each time we use it until finally our hope and faith are strong and steady."

Romans 5:3-4 (TLB)

HE>Me

- Every _____ has a _____ .

The purpose for problems is to make you like Jesus Christ and to build character in your life.

“The sorrow in my heart is so great that it almost crushes me.”

Mark 14:34 (TEV)

“Father” he cried out, “everything is possible for you. Please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will, not mine!”

Mark 14:36 (NLT)

Jesus surrendered to God’s plan. God wants you to surrender to his plan too. He is teaching you to trust him in the Gethsemane of trouble.

“Our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.”

2 Corinthians 4:17 (NIV)

- God uses _____ to teach us to _____ him.

Temptations are situations designed by the devil to draw us away from God. God doesn’t cause temptation. He never tempts us to do evil. But God can use even our temptations to make us more like Jesus if we cooperate with him. Why? Because every temptation involves a choice. We can choose to do evil, or we can choose to obey God. When we choose to obey God, we take another step in our spiritual growth. Our character is shaped by our choices.

“Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.”

Matthew 4:1 (NIV)

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It is not a sin to be tempted.

"(Jesus) was tempted in every way that we are. But he did not sin!"

Hebrews 4:15b (CEV)

"The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience."

1 Corinthians 10:13a (NLT)

"If you love me, obey my commandments."

John 14:15 (NLT)

"And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure."

1 Corinthians 10:13b (NLT)

Ultimately, it all comes down to your choices. Will you choose to obey the temptation or will you choose to obey God? Every time you choose to obey God, you become more like Christ in your character.

- **God uses _____ to teach us to _____ .**

Trespasses are situations designed by other people to hurt us.

"Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who have trespassed against us."

Matthew 6:12

"People passing by shook their heads and hurled insults at Jesus... and the elders made fun of him... Even the bandits who had been crucified with him insulted him in the same way."

Matthew 27:39-44 (TEV)

HE>Me

Jesus said, "Father, forgive these people! They don't know what they're doing."

Luke 23:34 (CEV)

"They called him every name in the book and he said nothing back. He suffered in silence content to let God set things right."

1 Peter 2:23 (MSG)

If you're going to become like Christ, you have to learn to forgive.

- **Remember that God** _____ .

"... forgive others, just as God forgave you because of Christ."

Ephesians 4:32 (CEV)

- **Remember that God** _____ .

"You meant to hurt me, but God turned your evil into good to save the lives of many people, which is being done."

Genesis 50:20 (NCV)

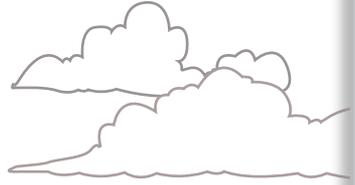
God uses trouble to teach us to trust. God uses temptation to teach us to obey. And God uses trespasses to teach us to forgive. He does all these things to make us like Christ.

"We go through exactly what Christ goes through. If we go through the hard times with him, then we're certainly going to go through the good times with him!"

Romans 8:17b (MSG)



DISCOVERY QUESTIONS



- God uses trouble to teach us to trust. What problem in your life has brought about the greatest growth in your character?

Please don't feel pressured to discuss every discovery question. The point is not to race through the session; the point is to take time to let God work in your lives.

- God uses temptation to teach us to obey. What lesson do you think God is trying to teach you?

- God uses trespasses to teach us to forgive. What is God teaching you about forgiveness right now?



Living with Purpose

- It's never too late to start growing. What progress would you like to see in your spiritual growth one year from now?



Diving Deeper

- Read the Memory Verse on page 30 every day this week as part of your daily devotions. See if you can have it memorized before your next group meeting.



Prayer Direction

- Take turns praying these Bible verses for yourself or for your group.

Example:

God wants us to grow up... like Christ in everything.

Ephesians 4:15 (MSG)

Prayer:

"God, please help me to grow up like Christ in every part of my life."
Or "God, please help all of us to grow up like Christ in every part of our lives."

Now you try it...

"In all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."

Romans 8:28 (NIV)

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“And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure.”

1 Corinthians 10:13b (NLT)

“Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who have trespassed against us.”

Matthew 6:12

“Forgive others, just as God forgave you because of Christ.”

Ephesians 4:32 (CEV)

- Pray for your group’s prayer requests. Be sure to record their requests on the **Small Group Prayer and Praise Report** on page 70.