

GROUP DISCUSSION

Questions for facilitating dynamic discussion

Tremors

Week 4: God Strengthens

Acts 16:19-25

Week of June 21, 2020

(Jeff Griffin, Senior Pastor)

Sometimes the trials and hardships of life can threaten to crush us. God doesn't promise to insulate us from pain, but He does promise to strengthen us so we can bear up under the weight of suffering. If we're listening, we just might detect a "tremor" from God that so reveals His power and goodness that we'll find ourselves singing with Paul and Silas in our darkest night.

Kicking it off: Tell about a time when you tried to lift or carry something but couldn't? What happened?

Discussion:

1. Last week we read about a slave woman possessed by a demon, by which she predicted the future. She made a lot of money for her masters by fortune-telling, which stopped when Paul exorcised the demon from her. *Acts 16:19* says, "When her owners realized that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to face the authorities."

Paul and Silas ended up being stripped, brutally beaten with rods, and fastened with stocks in the inner cell of the local jail. What do you suppose might have been the hardest part of this ordeal for Paul and Silas? (See *Acts 16:20-24*.) What aspect of their suffering can you relate to most?

2. *Acts 16:25* surprises us with what happened next: "About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God."

Paul and Silas responded to two truths that turned their dungeon into a cathedral. They responded to the presence of God and the beauty of God. Which of these tends to come more naturally to you in dark times? Why is that?

3. What is it about God's presence or His beauty that makes your soul want to sing?
4. Jeff shared about his grandma in her 90s, who has committed twenty-six Bible verses to memory, which she recites when she can't sleep at night. Do you ever read or recite the Scriptures as a way of replacing discouragement with the joy of the Lord? If so, what's one of your favorites?
5. What trial or hardship is weighing you down right now? How does this passage address that situation? Is God revealing His presence and power to you in some subtle way? If so, what's He saying to you?

Wrapping It Up: Pray that God would strengthen you to bear up under the weight of life's hardships. Ask Him to fill you with the joy of His presence and mesmerize you with his goodness.