

LIFE GROUP

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

God's Antidote to Deep Valleys April 7, 2024

Summary

In this sermon, Pastor Dale introduces the sermon series *God's Antidote for Stress* by highlighting the negative impacts of stress in today's society. Using Psalm 23:4 as the focal text, Pastor Dale explores the theme of navigating life's valleys with God's guidance and comfort. Despite the challenges of valleys, God uses them to shape and strengthen our character, faith and trust in Him.

Scripture

The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Psalm 23:1-6 (NIV)

"Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light." Matthew 11:28-30 (NLT)

Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing. James 1:2-4 (NLT)

Let's Start

What are some common ways people deal with stress?

Gratitude and Prayer

How has God worked in your life since we were together?

Let's Talk

1. How do you personally respond to stress and difficult situations? Do you tend to rely more on yourself or God during these times?
2. Pastor Dale said that valleys are inevitable, unpredictable and developmental. Can you share a personal experience of going through a challenging valley and how it shaped you?
3. Pastor Dale talked about some of the ways Paul's crisis impacted his life for good:

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- It increased his reliance on God's grace.
- It increased his understanding of true strength.
- It deepened his humility.
- It made him more empathetic towards others who suffered.
- It deepened his faith and perseverance.

Have you seen these positive results from difficult times in your own life? How?

4. What are some practical ways we can rely on God's grace and strength during times of stress and adversity?
5. Jesus offers us rest for our souls in Matthew 11:28-30. How can we experience this rest amid life's challenges?

Let's Act

Psalm 23 is well known as a Scripture passage to lean on in difficult times. What other scriptures are especially helpful to you in times of need?

In the sermon, Pastor Dale referred to his daughter, Bethany's, podcast, *Overcomers with a Cup of Tea*. In this podcast, she addresses how to help our children and adolescents manage difficulties that often lead to stress, worries and anxiety.

If you'd like to get some very helpful and practical skills for dealing with your child or student, view the podcast using the links:

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