



Connect Group Study

A Life Question #3 “Who shares my tough stuff” series

Week: September 1-7, 2019

Pastor David Staff

CONNECT [] GROUPS

OUR PERSPECTIVE: The Purpose for Tough Stuff

Romans 8:18-39

This week’s CGS launches our “Cord of Three Strands” Fall Gather Teaching series. This week’s teaching focused on the question “Does God my heavenly Father have a purpose for all the tough stuff?” In Romans the apostle Paul reminds us that the glory which is coming will eclipse any comparison with the present difficulty of suffering. In a day that is coming, and will last forever, no one will ever say, “Oh, I could just wish that I didn’t need to endure such terrible difficulty during my time on earth.”

But how was Paul so sure that the coming glory would evaporate the personal cost of past suffering? **This study explores why Paul was so sure of what was ahead...that our HOPE would even be more sure.**

GETTING STARTED – What *example from your life’s experience* can you share that illustrates how suffering or struggle you endured prepared you for something greater later on?

- Did such an experience change your perspective at all?
- GK Chesterton said, “A man can see great things from the valley, and only small things from the peak.” What makes “seeing great things” difficult when you’re “in the valley.” Where does one’s eyes need to be?

IN THE SCRIPTURES – So, what IS ahead? And how do we know? Is it actually more wonderful than we can imagine, or are we (Christians) simply hoping for something that is pie-in-the-sky?

Few spoke of the coming glories more passionately than Paul. Let’s explore how he knew what was coming.

READ and OBSERVE 2 Corinthians 12:1-10 (NOTE: The “man” Paul knows is himself)

- What unique experience did Paul have? (cf. Luke 23:39-43)
- What was forbidden for Paul out of his experience?
- What was the purpose for Paul’s suffering (12:7-10)...how would you summarize it?

OTHER INTIMATIONS OF COMING GLORY Read and discuss what you are hearing the Spirit say

- Romans 8:18-25 List the things that will happen in the coming glory
- 1 Corinthians 2:6-12 From where in the OT is the quote here? What does vs. 9 say about next?
- 2 Corinthians 4:16-5:5 What “perspective” do these verses give God’s sons and daughters?

SHARING QUESTION: Have you ever shared these verses with someone who does not know Jesus, or who is uncertain about the future? Is there someone coming to mind with whom you could share? What kind of interesting discussion might this generate?

Be sure to share
“your tough stuff” in
prayer together.”

SOME TIME TO APPLY - “seeing great things from the valley”

- ✓ Name some specific ways these passages help your perspective about any tough stuff you are facing these days
- ✓ Pray together for specific opportunity to share with someone the coming “beyond description” glory out ahead.

FINISH – Does everyone in your Connect Group have a “Cord of Three Strands” Devotional? This fall we are using this tool to deepen in a key life question.

