



SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Week 6 March 26 2023
"Storms of Life"

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, you know that sometimes our faith deteriorates when our circumstances deteriorate. Help us not to lose faith when the storms of life come our way and remind us once again that you will never leave us or forsake us. And when we are tempted to abandon you, like the disciples on that fateful evening, remind us of how these same men would risk the rest of their lives to ensure that future generations could know with certainty that, in fact, you are near. We pray this in the name of Jesus. Amen.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

Mark 14:48-50 (NIV)

⁴⁸ "Am I leading a rebellion," said Jesus, "that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me? ⁴⁹ Every day I was with you, teaching in the temple courts, and you did not arrest me. But the Scriptures must be fulfilled." ⁵⁰ Then everyone deserted him and fled.

1 Peter 1:3-9 (NIV)

³ Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, ⁵ who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶ In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. ⁷ These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. ⁸ Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, ⁹ for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

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INTRODUCTION

Many times, our faith deteriorates as our circumstances deteriorate. When that happens, our faith is quickly overcome by fear and the future looks dark. The apostle Peter experienced this and he temporarily fled his faith in Jesus.

It's human nature to assume the worst about God when circumstances are at their worst. It can seem as if God is far away or not there at all. In the darkest hours, even Peter believed this for a time. But God was near to Peter; and he is near to us as well.

QUESTIONS

1. Do you like the season of spring? Why or why not?
2. Leveraging Mark's words (see 14:50 on page 1), have you ever “deserted” faith and “fled”? If so, why? If not, why not?
3. Why does our faith have a tendency to rise and fall with circumstances? Did you come to faith in the midst of good times or bad times?
4. Read Mark 14:48–50 (on page 1).
 - What stands out to you?
 - What are some reasons everyone deserted Jesus and fled?
5. Read I Peter 1:3-9 (on page 1). What serves as the anchor or stabilizing force for Peter's faith? What role does suffering play in the life of a believer?

FINAL APPLICATION

What is one way that you can strengthen your faith in difficult times?