



CONNECT GROUP NOTES

Sunday 01.10.2023

“The God of the hereafter”

Preacher

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Scripture

“Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, ³ because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. ⁴ Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.”

James 1:2-4

Thought

The book of James speaks to the reality of challenge in the Christian life. Trials come, and when they do, how we view God's character matters. Do we trust His sovereignty even when we don't have clarity?

God has some amazing promises for us - and those promises don't dissolve when our circumstances do. Rather, His promises to us remain despite challenging times and His good works continue.

God's peace is connected to His presence, not our circumstances. This means two things; firstly, that tough times come and those times are not a judgement of our faith. Secondly, we can discover a lasting peace in the midst of the storms of life, because He promises to never leave or forsake us.

Even in crisis, God's purposes don't crumble. He can, and will do a good work in us and through us in the midst of difficult seasons. His call upon our



life doesn't fall prey to the unexpected twists and turns of the journey - rather His purposes persevere and even flourish in the midst of them.

God doesn't leave our lives in the midst of pain. He remains closer than a brother, He walks through the valleys with us, and when our faith gets tested, our endurance grows and our fear of death dissolves.

We don't come to Jesus because of what He does, we come to Him for who He is. It's because of this that we can come to Him in brokenness, we can come to Him when healing is not forthcoming, we can come to Him in the midst of the storm, and know that He is still good.

Surely, He is the God of the hereafter. The story doesn't end with loss. He is here after the pain, He is here after our confusion, He is here after our suffering, and He is good.

May we know the reality of this truth today - that in the midst of challenge, Christ walks hand-in-hand with us, bestows His peace upon us and beckons us to keep our eyes on Him. May we walk in the light of His mercy and grace today, knowing that the one who walked the dusty path to the cross also paves the way to a future ever bright, ever full of His love, where He wipes away every tear.

Discussion Points

1. What does it mean to trust in God's sovereignty even when I don't have clarity?
2. If God's peace is connected to His presence and not my circumstances, how does that change my approach to suffering or loss?
3. Who in my world needs me to be a vessel of God's peace while they go through difficult times? What could I do this week to be a blessing to someone struggling with life's circumstances?

Personal application + Prayer



Dear Lord,

You know my heart and everything in it. You know my every thought, my every joy and every pain. You walk with me through the valleys, You stand with me in the storm, and today I lift my eyes afresh to You. You are my source of strength, You are my light, my joy, my song and my hope eternal. May I forever find peace in Your presence, Lord, and be a source of Your hope to the world around me.

Amen.