

Week 4:

How to Smile Through Your Tears

I AM
STRONG

Questions

1. What illustration, story or example stood out to you this week?
2. Read John 13:7. When has there been pain or loss in your life that you didn't understand but now you can see where God was at work? How can you use that painful experience to share God's faithfulness with others?
3. Read Genesis 50:20. How does the story of Joseph affect your outlook on how to handle pain & suffering?
4. Pastor John says to turn to God in your pain, rather than turning away from God because of your pain. Why do you believe that can be so difficult to do? How do you make sure you're doing it consistently?
5. In God's hands, our pain can be repurposed for unimaginable good. Does that comfort you? Why or why not?
6. Read Genesis 41:16. Joseph understood that he could not answer Pharaoh's question, but Joseph knew that God could provide the answer. Where have you been trying to find the answer but not relying on God's provision and power? (In broken relationships, finances, health, anxiety, etc.) What needs to change?

Scripture References

1 Thessalonians 4:17, Philippians 1:6, Romans 8:28, Revelation 21:4, John 13:7, Genesis 37:18-20, Genesis 37:23-24, Genesis 39:20-21, Genesis 41:16, Genesis 50:20, Genesis 45:1-7, Genesis 50:18-20

Takeaways

- Four Promises of God:
 - You will be reunited with loved ones (1 Thessalonians 4:17)
 - You will be made perfect (Philippians 1:6)
 - God will bring good from your pain (Romans 8:28)
 - You will be healed completely (Revelation 21:4)
- Keep believing in God's plans and promises even when your pain screams not to.
- Step One: Turn **to God** in your pain, rather than turning away from God because of your pain.
 - Whether pain drives you toward God or away from God does not depend on your pain; it depends on **you**.
- Step Two: **Believe** God will work unthinkable good from your unthinkable pain.

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- The more painful it is now, the more beautiful it will be when you see God miraculously turn the pain for good.
- Step Three: Hand over the core issue of your suffering to God.
- What Joseph could not do on his own - bring good out of his pain - God did, because Joseph handed his life to God.
- **In God's hands, our pain can be repurposed for unimaginable good.**