

NO, WITH A PROMISE

IN THE MEANTIME – PART 2

START TALKING. WITH AN ICEBREAKER QUESTION:

- You can find some on page 6 [here](#).
- What is something you are looking forward to doing this summer?

START THINKING. ASK THE QUESTIONS THAT WILL GET YOUR GROUP THINKING.

- Why do you think people assume that faith in God will remove adversity from life?
- Have you ever made that assumption? If so, how did it influence your relationship with God?

2 Corinthians 12:7-9 (NIV)

To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, **there was given me** a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me.

Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me.

But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, **for my power** is made perfect in weakness."

Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, **so that** Christ's power may rest on me.

START SHARING. CHOOSE THE QUESTIONS THAT WILL CREATE OPENNESS.

- Reread the passage above. What do you like about it? What do you not like about it?
- Do you feel permission to plead with God to take away your difficult circumstances? Do you believe he responds to that kind of prayer? Why or why not?
- Mark said, "Embracing your inability enables you to experience Christ's ability." Share about a time when you did just that.
- Talk about a time when you or someone you knew faced difficult circumstances and God was silent. How did that experience affect your faith in the short term? How did it affect your faith in the long term?
- Is it difficult for you to accept that challenging circumstances can come from the hand of a loving God? Why or why not?
- What would it look like for you to "delight in weakness" for the sake of Jesus? How would it change the way you respond to adversity?
- What is the "thorn in your side," the ongoing struggle or challenge that you can't change and about which you need to accept God's grace in order to move forward? What can you do to begin to view that "thorn" as a gift that comes with a purpose and a promise from your heavenly Father?

START PRAYING. BE BOLD, AND PRAY WITH POWER.

- Father, I refuse to hold it against you if you refuse to remove the adversity in my life. I will trust in you. Remind me that there is no pain you waste, no tears you ignore, and no difficulty that is without purpose.

START DOING. COMMIT TO A STEP AND LIVE IT OUT THIS WEEK.

- Pray the Lord's prayer. Pause thoughtfully on the "thy will be done" part.