



Sermon Discussion Guide – *March 10, 2019*

SERIES – ROOTS: *Facing Times Of Drought*

TITLE - “*Facing Failure?*”

Jeremiah 17:5-10 (NLT)

SUMMARY - The Bible gives us wonderful examples of cultivating a deeper faith when we face spiritual drought. It is important to grow deep roots of faith so that when we are running on empty we still find hope and confidence in God’s faithfulness. The deeper we find our roots the more likely we will still produce fruit in times of drought. This week we look at the story of Simon of Cyrene. Simon faced the unfairness of carrying the cross for Jesus. Sometimes the crosses we carry end up being for eternal glory.

DAILY STUDY & PRAYER

Read / Reflect / Respond

(*READ* the verse, take a moment to *REFLECT* on its meaning, *RESPOND* by writing down some thoughts and praying)

Monday - 2 Corinthians 4:17 “*For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison,*”

Tuesday - Mark 8:34 “*And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.”*”

Wednesday - James 1:2 “*Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds,*”

Thursday - 2 Corinthians 1:3–4 “*God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.*”

Friday - John 16:33 “*I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.*”

Saturday - “*God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; courage to change the things I can; and wisdom to know the difference.*” – *Serenity Prayer*

GROUP DISCUSSION

(*This is only a guide – select the points you want to discuss or supplement with your own materials*)

Open with Prayer

1. What is something you remember from the sermon that stood out to you or never heard before?
2. How can our experiences with injustice lead to a downward spiral of stress and create a negative mindset?
3. In what ways can “carrying a cross” be a physical and spiritual reality?
4. The Prayer of Serenity (under Saturday’s daily study) strikes a powerful chord in the soul of anybody who reads it. Why do you think that is? What are the truths that stand out to you? Why would non-Christians appreciate such a prayer?

Close with prayer requests and prayer

NEXT STEPS (Optional for group discussion)

1. **TEMPERATURE GAUGE** – How am I doing when it comes to feelings of unfairness? Are my roots deep enough to handle it?
2. **RESPOND** – How is the Lord calling me to respond? In confession and repentance? Prayer for help and guidance? Seeking out a confidant or listening ear? Take a moment to write down one action step.
3. **PRACTICE** – What is one way that you can incorporate or practice deepening your roots this week?



Sermon Discussion Guide Leader Notes

Preparing to Lead Your Group

- ✓ **PRAY** for insight as you begin to prepare for leading your group. Ask for God's wisdom, that the Holy Spirit will be the teacher and that you will be God's instrument to lead the group to greater understanding and a willingness to commit to becoming more like God. *Prayer should be your primary source of personal preparation for leading your group!*
- ✓ **PLAN** where you want to take your group during the next series. Is your group strong in some areas and weak in others? How can you challenge the members to live more balanced Christian lives?
- ✓ **EVALUATE** after each session and at the end of a series. Reflect on what went well and what didn't. Re-evaluation is key to your growth as a leader. How are you doing with leading the discussion: is it stimulating, challenging, and meaningful? Are you able to keep the group on track? Do you need to make some changes?

Using This Sermon Discussion Guide

- Review the discussion guide and sermon notes for this week. You can also view the sermon from our website, www.faithunitedepc.org. As the discussion leader, you should preview and evaluate the questions based on the needs of your group.
- Feel free to adapt the format as needed. If your group is mature and wants to dig deeper, consider using the Next Steps section or add additional Scripture and resources. Remember this is only a guide and you don't have to complete all of it. It is a tool to promote good discussion. The goal is good discussion not necessarily getting through every question.
- The questions with Bible verses associated with them are there to encourage Bible literacy. So encourage different people to open their Bibles and read selected verses if they are willing and able.
- Your goal as the leader is to bring the group into a stimulating discussion that helps the members recognize their needs for personal life change. Ultimately you want them to be willing to commit to change with accountability to the group. Accountability helps us to persevere in our commitments and achieve the blessings of success.