

THE **crossing** **small groups**

So That When It Does Happen | John 13:19 Sermon Discussion Participant Guide

Purpose of Discussion: To help each other be more ready to trust God and experience peace when bad things happen to us.

Sermon Reminder: Dave continued our “Jesus is More” sermon series by preaching about when Jesus readied his disciples for his betrayal and death in John 13. We learned that we’ll only experience the trust and peace that God wants for us when we see the bad things that happen to us in light of the bigger story of God that our lives are a part of.

Icebreaker: Early in the sermon, Dave showed a photo of what one restaurant did to protect its drive-through workers from Covid. Each employee had a protective bubble suit that they wore to avoid exposure to the Covid-19 virus. **If you could have a kind of protective bubble suit that would shield you from some of the bad stuff in life, what kind of bad things would you want it to protect you from?** (e.g. work stress, hard conversations, family conflict, sickness, politics, disappointments, etc.)

Discussion:

1. Of course, none of us has a protective bubble suit, but most of us do want a kind of formula to control our lives and keep the bad things from happening (i.e. “If I do this, then bad things won’t happen to me.”). What would that formula be for you?
2. When was a time in your life when bad things happened and you struggled to believe that God was still good and in control?
3. In our passage, Jesus knows that incredibly bad things are about to happen including his betrayal by Judas, Peter’s denial, Jesus’ torture and crucifixion. He is trying to prepare and ready his disciples for it. Read John 13:19-21.

John 13:19-21

¹⁹ “I am telling you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe that I am who I am. ²⁰ Very truly I tell you, whoever accepts anyone I send accepts me; and whoever accepts me accepts the one who sent me.”

²¹ After he had said this, Jesus was troubled in spirit and testified, “Very truly I tell you, one of you is going to betray me.”

4. To ready his followers, Jesus didn't give them the "why," but he gave them the "who." How would believing that Jesus is "I am who I am" help the disciples in this moment and in the coming days of hardship?
5. Dave said that "the one bigger story of the Bible is always the context of every verse and story in the Bible." In light of the bigger story of the Bible, how did these horribly bad events (betrayal, denial, torture, crucifixion) turn out for good in God's bigger story?
6. It's uncanny how when bad things come into our lives, our knee-jerk reaction is usually to think and believe the opposite of what is actually true. Look at the comparison below. Talk about the ways we misinterpret what God is doing in our lives because we forget the bigger story.

When bad things happen ...

Our usual reaction	The true and bigger story (because of who he is)
I'm abandoned and alone	God is right here with me
I knew I couldn't trust God	God is trustworthy and always faithful
God isn't really good after all	God's plan is better/bigger than I can understand
Life is random and out of control	God is in control and carefully guiding my life
This is going to end badly	God will ultimately bring good through the bad
Living in the false small story	Living in God's true and bigger story for me

7. Read John 16:33. What promises or truths of God's bigger story do you need to cling to today? (Refer to the right side of the comparison above.) How would that help you to experience the peace and courage that Jesus wants to give you?

John 16:33

"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

Sharing and Prayer:

Consider splitting up men and women or into 2 smaller groups for this time.

What's going on in your life right now that you need to remember/live in God's bigger story? Or is there someone you know that is going through a hard time that you could pray for, listen to, serve, or encourage to remember God's bigger story in some way?

Share those with each other and then pray for each other that God's Spirit would apply the truths and promises of God's bigger story to your hearts.