WELCOMING TRIALS AS FRIENDS DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

JAMES 1:2-4

1	What is an example in your life where you can say, with sincerity, that a trial was necessary to bring you where you are today?
2	Does our world today expect and embrace suffering? What about Christians? Do they embrace trials as something God allows and even ordains for the believer?
	How does our culture's veiw of suffering affect how we respond to it?
3	Are we supposed to deny our feelings when we "count it all joy" in the midst of trials (James 1:2)? Is it sin to feel sorrow and grief in a trial? If not, how do these feelings fit in with God's call for joy? Look at the questions below to help guide you in your thoughts about joy.
	♥ How is joy distinct from happiness (see 2Cor. 6:10; 7:4-6) Define "joy" in your own words.
4	To count suffering as joy, we must realize what God is doing in suffering and trust Him.
	What is God accomplishing through trials? See Psalm 119:67, 71, Heb. 12:11, Rom. 5:3-5, 1 Pet. 5:10
	What have you seen God personally do in your own life through a trial or difficulty? Spend time thanking God for the trials and what he taught you or how changed in you.
5	The word translated "steadfastness" in verse 3 literally means "to remain under," like a person holding up a heavy weight for a long period of time. Read Prov 24:16. What is the difference between the "righteous man" and the "wicked" when they fall? Personalize it by substituting your name for "righteous man."
	♥ How can this passage encourage you? How can you use it to encourage others?

	What is the connection between going through a trial and finding joy or growing in steadfastness? Read 5:40-41.	d Psalm 66:10-12, Isaiah 40:28-31, Acts
6	James 1:4 tells us that we should let trials do their work so that we can be "perfect and complete lacki James means by perfect? Read Phil. 3:12-16 and Ephesians 4:13 Note: the same word is translated "perfect	ng in nothing." What do you think " or "mature."
	What is God's ultimate goal for you as a Christian?	
	The word perfect in James 1:4 is linked with completeness and wholeness. What does this word mean as woman (see 1 Chronicles 28:9 ["whole"]; 1 Kings 11:4 ["wholly devoted"])?	it relates to the inner life of a man or
	In what areas of your life can the group pray for you that you would grow to maturity in Christlikeness	s? Spend time in prayer as a group.
0	Is there someone in your group that is suffering right now? How can you encourage them this week? We them?	What can you do specifically to bless
	In your group talk about some of the trials you are going through. What trials trouble you most? Maybe a few people could share one of their top trials in life right now. Take time to pray for each other, for wisdom and endurance in the midst of difficulty.	PRAYER REQUESTS
The blue pay bur [bei The crue mae the of c	fallow [unplowed] field is smug, contented, protected from the shock of the plow and the agitation of ng turned over]. Such a field, as it lies year after year, becomes a familiar landmark to the crow and the jaySafe and undisturbed, it sprawls lazily in the sunshine, the picture of sleepy contentment. But it is ing a terrible price for its tranquility; never does it feel the motions of mounting life, nor see the wonders of sting seed, nor the beauty of ripening grain. Fruit it can never know, because it is afraid of the plow and and broken up]. In direct opposite to this, the cultivated field has yielded itself to the adventure of living. protecting fence has opened to admit the plow, and the plow has come as plows always come, practical, all, business-like and in a hurry. Peace has been shattered by the shouting farmer and the rattle of chinery. The field has felt the travail of change; it has been upset, turned over, bruised and broken. But its ards come hard upon its labors. The seed shoots up into the daylight its miracle of life, curious, exploring new world above it. All over the field, the hand of God is at work in the age-old and ever renewed service reation. New things are born, to grow, mature, and consumate the grand prophecy latent in the seed in it entered the ground. Nature's wonders follow the plow A. W. Tozer	