

Portrait of a Struggle

Fallen World: What to Think, When to Resist

By Paul David Tripp

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Leader's Guide to be used with the conference on DVD
(Ten 25 minute sessions on 3 DVDs)
for Small Groups or Individuals

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SESSION 1

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Often we are afraid to share our struggles because we fear judgment, because we want to appear godly and righteous; because we are embarrassed to admit they are struggles; because we want to be independent and strong.
2. We add to the difficulty and the troubles when we are not honest about them; we avoid the help and encouragement we need; we prevent others from using their gifts.
3. Dr. Tripp says the answer is "Jesus". **What do you think he means?** Because Jesus' work on the cross gives us hope, pours out God's grace into our lives.

SESSION 2

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. We should be dissatisfied because of what we have lost; because we know we were created for perfect unity, wholeness, and cooperation but instead we live in and among disunity, brokenness, and self-absorption. The mature Christian is not satisfied or content with the presence of sin and brokenness; the mature Christian believes the grace of God can help us reclaim what has been lost.

SESSION 3

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. We seek autonomy and self-sufficiency which results only in brokenness.
2. Autonomy and self-sufficiency.
3. Independent wisdom is not in submission to God but rather is wisdom that tries to make us the center of our universe.
4. Because there is a creator, everything he makes belongs to him; God can do what he wishes with his creation.

SESSION 4

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. We place ourselves in the center and live for our own recognition and our own kingdom; we do not love others as we should; we live trying to fill the emptiness; we struggle to say "no" to things that should not rule us; we live with addictions; we live for ourselves rather than God.

SESSION 5

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Already we have been given salvation in Christ, the gift of his Spirit, his Word; but have not yet overcome the presence of sin, been made perfect, or inherited the new earth.
2. To make us mature and complete; to conform us into the image of Christ; to make us into a temple where he can dwell.
3. Because it reminds us that God loves us-he is working for our good; we know we are within God's will and that he has provided us with a redeemer in Christ and a counselor in the Spirit
4. To stop depending on your own strength and your own wisdom; to realize there is no righteousness within us.

SESSION 6

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. It is a means of accepting God's grace and love; it develops godliness, perseverance, character, and hope; it brings us to maturity where we will lack nothing; it offers us the crown of life.

SESSION 7

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Because of God's Spirit dwelling in us we have the power within us to do anything; God's Spirit is there to help us in our struggle.
2. The glory is the Spirit and it means we have the ability to overcome and grow from our struggles, we have the power to respond in godly ways; it means God expects us to grow and to live in unity with others; we are to face these God-given struggles with courage and love.

SESSION 8

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. When it begins to rule our heart; when it takes our focus away from loving God or loving others; when we make it more important than God or others.
2. Seek forgiveness; depend once again on God's grace; fix our eyes on Christ; press forward.
3. Our struggles are God's purpose in our lives designed to make us like him; our struggles turn us toward God to seek his grace.

SESSION 9

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Saying things that should not be said, doubt, Satan, anger, fear, lust, self-centeredness, etc.
2. Watch television.
3. It reminds us to place God in the center of our lives and desires so that we do not add trouble to the struggles through our self-centeredness.
4. It encourages us to persevere because it reminds us that we are loved and the recipients of amazing grace; it can drive us to find our identity in Christ.
5. It will help us rejoice in our trials remembering that they are given to us by God as an expression of his love toward us.

SESSION 10

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Self-centered anger is used to get what we want; it doesn't consider the needs or interests of others but only ourselves; self-centered anger will not accomplish God's work; God centered anger is used to protect others and God's holiness.
2. Because faith in God will lead us to turn to him for grace and help instead of away from him; faith in God will give us peace that God is in control.
3. Binding security in understanding attempts to remove the need for faith and trust, it is a way to feel in control so that there is no mystery or unknowns; finding security in a person is to put faith in who another is, it may require moving forward without full understanding of the situation or outcome but full understanding of how the person operates.