



Life Groups 2018

NLC Life Group Sermon Study

Week of March 25, 2018

Sermon: Palm Sunday—
Thanking God for the Thorns

Life Group Schedule

15 MIN Eat, Meet & Greet

15 MIN Ice Breaker Game: **Categories**. Divide your group into four teams or more, with about five members each. Encourage them to team with people they know the least. Instruct each team to find at least six things in common with every team member. Don't allow teams to use simple things like height, hair color, or clothing worn. Limiting the similarities to non-material things helps people learn more about each other and engage in active, more meaningful conversations that will promote inclusion and lasting connections. The game ends once every team has come up with six things they have in common; the winner is the team that achieves the objective first.

NOTE: Feel free to use as much or as little of the study as you like, in whatever way flows most naturally for your group.

OPENING PRAYER

45–60 MIN Palm Sunday: Thanking God for the Thorns

TAKE TURNS READING 2 COR. 12:7-10

- Whatever Paul's thorn was, it was a real irritant that bothered him and changed the way he did things.

ROMANS 8:29 "For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren."

- Satan took from Job everything that he had, except his wife. Yes, satan did it, but God allowed it.

JOB 1:12 "Then the Lord said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has in in your power, only do not put forth your hand on him.' So Satan departed from the presence of the Lord."

- Sometimes thorns happen because we make stupid decisions. Regardless, you know it's a thorn when it doesn't go away.

WHY DOES GOD GIVE US THORNS?

1. He wants to change our perspective.

2 COR. 1:4 Earlier in this same letter the apostle Paul says, "He comforts us when we are in trouble, so that we can share this same comfort with others in trouble."

2. He wants to grow our patience.

2 COR 12:8-9 "I entreated the Lord three times that it might

depart from me. And he has said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you...'

3. He wants us to discover His power.

2 COR. 12:9 "My Power is perfected in weakness...I would rather boast about my weaknesses that the power of Christ may dwell in me."

4. We can experience His peace in the storm.

2 COR. 12:10 "Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak; then I am strong!"

1 PETER 5:6 "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God that he may exalt you in due time."

JER. 29:11 "I know the plans I have for you...plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope!"

- In order for God to bring those plans to pass, He needs to be in control.

ROMANS 8:28 "For all things work together for good to those who love Him and are called according to his purpose."

EPHESIANS 5:20 "Always give thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God."

- In order to be the person God created us to be, to live up to our full potential, we've got to trust Him in the fog, trust Him through the storm, and thank Him for the thorn.

Q1. What do you believe is your greatest strength? How about your most annoying weakness?

Q2. What does the phrase in 2 Corinthians 12:9 "My power is perfected in weakness" mean to you?

Q3. In what area of your life do you struggle with patience, and why?

Q4. Is there any place in your life where you're having a hard time finding peace?

Q5. Is there anything you need to trust God for right now?

PRAY TOGETHER THROUGH ANY NEED THAT HAS SURFACED.

ANNOUNCEMENTS