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SESSION FOUR:

DEALING WITH DETOURS

Let's talk about detours—the unexpected turns in life that lead us down roads we never planned to travel. It's one thing when God's answers seem delayed, but it's another thing when life takes a sharp turn, and suddenly, we're in a place we never imagined. Detours often cause us to question God—and even blame Him for our pain. If you've ever struggled to reconcile the goodness of God with the reality of your situation, you're not alone.

But here's the truth: the presence of a problem does not mean the absence of our God.

The detours in our lives can be painful, but they also hold the potential to strengthen our faith in ways we never thought possible. In this session, we're going to look at how the detours we would never choose can often lead us to the faith we've always wanted.



*"My ears had
heard of you, but
now my eyes
have seen you."*

Job 42:5



GROUP DISCUSSION

Leader, read these questions aloud.

1. When was the last time your life took a detour? How did you respond? Did you blame God?
2. In what ways have you experienced God's comfort in the midst of a problem or a difficult season?
3. In the video teaching, Todd says, "Tribulation leads to revelation." How have the hard things in your life deepened your understanding of God or your relationship with Him?
4. What are some practical steps you have taken or can take in seasons of doubt to strengthen your faith?



CLOSING PRAYER

Select a volunteer to pray this closing prayer over the group:

"God, we thank You that You never leave us, even in the detours. Help us to process our doubts in a healthy way so that we can grow closer to You. When You feel distant or far away, remind us that you're always close and always working. Help us to listen to what we know, not what we fear. In Jesus' name, amen."

WORK OUT THE DOUBT

PERSONAL STUDY

→ READ

The poster child for bad things happening to good people was a guy named Job. Job suffered unimaginable losses because of a conversation that happened in Heaven that he never got to hear. God didn't *cause* Job's pain, but He did *trust* Job with pain.

Read Job 1-2 and Job 42. Notice God's faithfulness to Job (and Job's faithfulness to God).

→ RELATE

Has there ever been a season of your life where you could relate to Job? A season where you suffered and didn't know why or where God was? How did you respond?

How does Job's life inspire you to view the painful places in your life differently?

→ REFLECT

If you ever felt like God was silent, you're in good company. Even David—the man after God's own heart—walked through seasons where he felt like God was silent. In Psalm 35:22, David began to doubt God. What did he worry that God's silence meant?

Like David, we often associate God's silence with distance or indifference. Have you ever felt like God was distant or that He didn't care because you couldn't hear from Him or see Him working? Spend some time writing about it.

While silence can make us *feel* far from God, not every feeling is a fact! Just because we *feel* alone doesn't mean we *are* alone. What contrasting statement does David make about God's presence in Psalm 23:4?

Just because you're walking through darkness doesn't mean God has left you. He is Immanuel, which means "God with us." What else does God's Word say in Psalm 34:18?

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What's something you can do in this season to spiritually prepare yourself for the detours you don't see coming?

Check all that apply or write your own:

- Get in a small group so you have the right community
- Memorize Scripture so God's Word is hidden in your heart
- Develop the habit of prayer so you're in tune with the Spirit
- Other: _____

If God feels distant and hard to hear, sometimes we just need help turning down the noise so we can hear His whisper. What would it look like for you to silence the noise this week so you can hear God better?

Check all that apply or write your own:

- Start the morning with prayer and a Bible study
- Trade in Netflix before bed with some quiet time
- Replace scrolling through social media with time spent on the Bible app
- Listen to worship music or a sermon on your daily commute
- Other: _____

→ RESPOND

Through Job and David's trials, they still declared their hope was in God. A declaration can help interrupt doubt and build faith in who you are in Christ and who God is. Jesus said we will know the truth, and the truth will set us free, but we can't expect to read truth once and receive instant transformation. We need to repeat it until we believe it.

Here's a step-by-step process for creating your own declarations:

STEP

1

Identify the Need

Dig deep and identify any lies you might be believing or thoughts that aren't lining up with God's truth. What do you need to be reminded of? Examples:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> God's Presence (Joshua 1:9) | <input type="checkbox"/> God's Provision (Philippians 4:19) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> God's Peace (Philippians 4:7) | <input type="checkbox"/> God's Protection (Psalms 27:1) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> God's Strength (Isaiah 40:31) | <input type="checkbox"/> God's Guidance (Proverbs 3:5-6) |

STEP

2

Search God's Word

Once you've identified the needs, search for Bible verses that speak about that topic. For example, if you need peace, search the Scriptures for verses about anxiety, peace, or God's comfort. Or simply google "Bible verses on [your topic]."

STEP

3

Personalize the Scripture

Take the Scripture(s) and personalize it. For example, Philippians 4:19 says, "But my God shall supply all your needs according to his riches." If you are struggling with doubt in your finances, you would personalize it by changing it to: "God supplies my every need."

Now that you've identified what God's Word says about your need, take a few minutes to write your own declaration. Keep your declaration simple and concise so you can easily recall it when you need it most.

Here's an example:

My Need: Confidence

God's Truth: "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind." 2 Timothy 1:7

Declaration: I am equipped by God with power, love, and a sound mind.

Now, write your declaration below. Also, consider writing it on a sticky note and placing it somewhere you'll see it often.

My Need: _____

God's Truth: _____

Declaration: _____

For a more in-depth list of God's promises in Scripture and Todd and Julie Mullins' declarations, scan the QR Code.



→ PRAYER

Read Psalm 34:1-8 out loud as a prayer. Then in the space below, write a prayer of gratitude, thanking God for the truth of His Word and the reality of His presence.

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SUGGESTED READING

Don't Let Doubt Take You Out by Todd Mullins Chapters 9-11

**“DON'T FORGET IN THE DARK WHAT
GOD SHOWED YOU IN THE LIGHT.”**

Todd Mullins, Don't Let Doubt Take You Out