

Essential: Unwavering Faith

Study Guide for Small Group Discussion and Personal Application
Lynn Haven UMC – July 19, 2020 – Pastor Terry Tatum

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As our regathering process as a church continues over the summer, we are discussing what is **essential** to our existence as a congregation. This week we consider how Unwavering Faith is essential for life.

These last few weeks have been quite challenging for our church and community! Many of us are struggling with feeling isolated, being afraid, and sensing that our lives have been upended and the COVID-19 virus is out of control. Pastor Terry shared that he had a lot of questions for God such as, 1) Why us, why now? 2) Don't you remember what we have been through the last few years? 3) When will all of this be over? 4) Will things ever get back to normal? The list goes on and on.

Discussion Starters:

⇒ What has been hard for you in recent weeks? What kind of questions have you wanted to ask God?

Times are tough for us these days, but it wasn't always easy for people in Scripture either. In fact, it was really hard sometimes. Today we're walking through a story of a man who went through incredibly hard times but never lost faith in God: Job.

Here are some lessons we can learn from Job and his unwavering faith in God:

1) The righteous shall suffer.

In the land of Uz there lived a man whose name was Job. This man was blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil. (Job 1:1 NIV)

Bad things and good things happen to all people, it's part of life. We will all go through highs and lows, good times and bad, triumphs and tragedies. It's part of life, everyone's life, even the devoted followers of God.

2) God is always in control.

[Job] said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return there; the LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD." (Job 1:21 NRSV)

In the middle of an unbelievably horrific time, Job remembers God is always in control and praises his name.

3) Accept the good and the bad.

[Job] replied, "Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?" (Job 2:10 NIV)

Job never asks "why me?" He just accepts what comes and relies on God.

4) God is not mad at you.

"Consider now: Who, being innocent, has ever perished? Where were the upright ever destroyed? As I have observed, those who plow evil and those who sow trouble reap it." (Job 4:7-8 NIV)

Scripture tells us that we will reap what we sow and Job sowed goodness and faithfulness. God isn't punishing Job. God loves Job and He loves you, no matter what you are going through. Bad things happen, but what matters most is how we react. No matter what storm you are going through, the challenge is to remain faithful, trusting in God, just like Job.

5) God has a plan of love for you.

"Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation? (Job 38:4a)

Whenever you are struggling remember that God created the world and He loves you unconditionally, in the good times and in the challenging times.

6) God gives us a way out.

The LORD blessed the latter part of Job's life more than the first. (42:12a NIV).

Throughout all Job's difficulties, he never lost faith in God. The Lord rewarded Job for his faithfulness.

The Challenge

⇒ No matter your circumstances, say out loud – **"Blessed be the name of the LORD."** If you are a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, then you know this is true. No matter how bad things are, the best is yet to come. Because of that and all He has done for us, shout from the depths of your soul, **"Blessed be the name of the LORD."**