



A 4-WEEK SERIES FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT ON

# TRUSTING GOD

A HURT & PAIN SERIES FROM GROW'S ANNUAL TEACHING STRATEGY



CREATED WITH...

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## ABOUT THIS SERIES

An amusement park ride can spark joy or leave you feeling more than a bit scared. There are twists, turns, and sometimes, a little bit of pain, too. Those things are true in life, too, so how can we learn to overcome our feelings of fear whenever we experience them? In this 4-week series from the Old Testament, we'll look at stories where people trusted God to help them through their difficult moments. From these stories, we'll see that **God can turn fear into courage, hurt into hope, turn wrongs into rights, and transform our worry into trust.**

**WEEK 1**

This week, we'll take a look at Esther's story to see how she lived through a scary, sudden, life-or-death situation.

**BIG IDEA:** With God in our corner, we don't have to be afraid.

**BIBLE:** Esther 7:1–6; 2 Corinthians 4:6–12; Joshua 1:9

**WEEK 2**

This week, we'll hear Job's story as he inspires us to live through pain and suffering without turning away from God.

**BIG IDEA:** God can use pain to shape you into the image of Jesus.

**BIBLE:** Job 2:1–10; Romans 8:26–28; Psalm 34:18

**WEEK 3**

This week, we'll read from the book of Amos to see how he responded to the injustices he saw in his community.

**BIG IDEA:** God will make wrong things right.

**BIBLE:** Amos 5:10–15; James 5:1–8; Isaiah 1:17

**WEEK 4**

This week, we'll hear the words Jesus spoke to a group filled with worry about their lives, futures, and more.

**BIG IDEA:** Jesus invites us to trust Him with our worries and burdens.

**BIBLE:** Matthew 11:28–30; Psalm 91:9–15; 1 Peter 5:7

**MEMORY VERSE:** "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." — Romans 15:13 (NIV)

# WEEK 1

## DISCUSSION GUIDE



### THIS WEEK

#### **BIG IDEA**

With God in our corner,  
We don't have to be afraid

#### **BIBLE**

Esther 7:1–6; 2 Corinthians 4:6–12;  
Joshua 1:9

### **ABOUT THIS WEEK**

Roller coasters are full of twists and turns, but we might feel terrified by a sudden or unexpected drop. This week, we'll take a look at Esther's story to see how she lived through a scary, sudden, life-or-death situation. Her story reminds us that even if we're afraid of the sudden changes that happen in our lives, **With God in our corner, we don't have to be afraid.**

#### Conversation Starters:

- Do you love or hate roller coasters? Why?
- How do you typically respond to fear? Do you immediately want to conquer it? Escape it? Avoid it?
- Has fear ever been a positive motivator for you? If you feel comfortable, would you share what that looked like in your life?

#### Scripture:

- Before we read Esther 7:1-6 together, what was Esther's issue? What caused her fear? (Someone set the scene for what we're about to read)

#### **Choose either one person or the entire group to read Esther 7:1-6 together.**

- What's one thing that stands out to you in the passage we just read?
- What would you have done if you had been in Esther's position? How would you arrive at that decision?
- How do you think Esther's belief that it was her responsibility to act and not anyone else's gave her the courage to speak up?
- The Book of Esther is the only book in the Bible that doesn't mention God by name, but God's fingerprint is all over this story. How do you see God appear in Esther's story and her relationship with Mordecai?
- Has there been a time you found yourself feeling more courageous because you had someone around to support you? Why do you think it was easier to speak up?
- Are you in a situation now where fear is keeping you from acting? Why? How do you think God wants you to handle that situation?

#### **Choose one person to read Joshua 1:9**

- Where is a place in your life where you could use God's courage? What would it look like to pray for God's help?
- The next time you are afraid, what's one thing you can do to trust God for courage?

**Close out your time by praying for God to remind us that we can be courageous because He is with us.**

## WEEK 2

### DISCUSSION GUIDE



#### THIS WEEK

### **BIG IDEA**

God can use pain to shape you into the image of Jesus.

### **BIBLE**

Job 2:1–10; Romans 8:26–29;  
Psalm 34:18

## **ABOUT THIS WEEK**

Sharp turns are a thrilling part of roller coasters, but after slamming our knees into the safety bar for the fourth time, our bodies are ready for the ride to end. This week, we'll hear Job's story as he inspires us to live through pain and suffering without turning away from God. His faithfulness and God's response help us remember **God can use pain to shape you into the image of Jesus.**

#### **Conversation Starters:**

- What's the best amusement park food ever? Why?
- What are some questions you ask (to God or just in general) when you find life has disappointed or hurt you?
- Why do you think it's so unsettling when we see difficult things happening to good people?

#### **Scripture:**

**Read Job 2:1-10 together, and then choose someone to describe what we just read in their own words.**

- The story of Job can be a confusing one for us to understand. What are some of the honest questions that come to mind after reading what we just read together?
- Why do you think Job's story was included in the Bible? What do you think having Job's story in Scripture tells us about God?
- Have you ever been through something or seen someone experience something really difficult but who came out on the other side better somehow? What happened?
- What is a way to give someone hope about getting through the pain without minimizing or speeding them through it?

**Read Psalm 34:18.**

- As a group, draw out 3-5 observations from this verse. Some of them may be extremely obvious, and that's ok.
- Has anyone ever experienced Psalm 34:18 in their own life? If you're comfortable, share it with the rest of the group. You never know who that may be encouraging for.
- Considering Psalm 34:18 and the story of Job as friends, what would be the best way for us to stand next to those going through difficult times of pain?

***Close out your time by praying for God to remind us that we can be courageous because He is with us.***

# WEEK 3

## DISCUSSION GUIDE



### THIS WEEK

#### **BIG IDEA**

God will make wrong things right.

#### **BIBLE**

Amos 5:10–15; James 5:1–8;  
Isaiah 1:17

### **ABOUT THIS WEEK**

People who cut to the front of the line at an amusement park can fill us with anger and a sense of injustice, but how should we respond to those feelings? This week, we'll read from the book of Amos to see how he responded to the injustices he saw in his community. Instead of just letting things slide, Amos took action, showing us **God will make wrong things right**.

#### Conversation Starters:

- What is the longest line you have ever waited in? What was it for? Was it worth the wait?
- What are the main three emotions you experience when you have been wronged? What about when someone you care about has been wronged?

#### Scripture:

**Before you read the passage together, take a moment to recap:**

- Who was Amos, and what is his Biblical significance? *[Amos was a prophet in the Bible who spoke out against unfairness. He told the people of Israel that they were treating the poor badly and just going through the motions of worship without really meaning it. He warned them that they would face trouble if they didn't change, but he also shared hope that things could get better in the future if they lived the way God intended.]*

**Read Amos 5:10-15 together.**

- In this verse, God uses Amos to communicate some hard truth to the people of Israel. Do you think God can still use people like us to do this today? If so, what might that look like?
- Why do you think God cares so deeply about injustice in the world around us?
- What does it look like to partner with God to make wrong things right like Amos did?

**Read Isaiah 1:17.**

- What does this verse tell us about what matters to God? What would it look like to put some of what this verse talks about into practice?
- What's one wrong you've noticed recently that you can help make right? What's one step you can take to do that this week?
- Who's one person you know who speaks out about the wrongs they see, does something about it, and talks to God about the situation? What's one thing they do that you could begin doing this week?

**Close out your time by praying for God to remind us that we can be courageous because He is with us.**

# WEEK 4

## DISCUSSION GUIDE



### THIS WEEK

#### **BIG IDEA**

Jesus invites us to trust Him with our worries and burdens.

#### **BIBLE**

Matthew 11:28–30; Psalm 91:9–15;  
1 Peter 5:7

### **ABOUT THIS WEEK**

As you climb towards a roller coaster's big drop, the view from the top can fill you with feelings of worry and fear. This week, we'll hear the words Jesus spoke to a group of people filled with worry about their lives, their futures, and more. Jesus comforted the people around him by telling them **Jesus invites us to trust Him with our worries and burdens.**

#### **Conversation Starters:**

- What's something you were terrified to do but eventually overcame the fear and did it?
- Have you ever been afraid of doing something and wouldn't do it until someone did it with you? How did knowing you weren't alone help when you were afraid or worried?
- What physical symptoms do you experience as a result of worry? What are the signs indicating that worry is beginning to take over?

#### **Scripture:**

##### **Read Matthew 11:28-30**

- What does this verse teach us about the heart of Jesus?
- Does this verse teach that nothing will ever be too much for us to carry?
- How would you describe the difference between Jesus taking troubles away completely and Jesus helping us carry the things that worry us?

##### **Read Matthew 6:25-34**

- What does this verse teach you about God and His heart for you?
- What does Matthew 6:33 mean? Does anyone have any stories of times you've done this and experienced the truth in this verse?

#### **Flesh it out:**

- **If you were going to teach someone to give their worries to Jesus, what steps would you tell them to take? What would it look like for you to take your own advice?**

#### **Challenge for the Week:**

- Memorize 1 Peter 5:7 NIV and recite it every day

***Close out your time by praying for God to remind us that we can be courageous because He is with us.***