



GROW. PRAY. SERVE.

Message: God Must Be Up to Something

PRAYER: Almighty God, even when we do not understand what you are doing, give us the power to trust you and know that you are at work. In the name of Christ, we pray. Amen.

ICEBREAKER: Share with your group a tough time you have experienced in the last five years.

INTRODUCTION: In order to appreciate the Psalms, a certain number of their characteristics should be kept in mind: they were written for singing. They were written for public worship in the temple. They are not merely poems, but song lyrics. They were written over a period of one thousand years, from the time of Moses, to the time of Ezra. Written in the language of the human spirit, they reflect the feelings of a person at a certain time. They are not cool, reasoned prose, but rather, deeply emotional works, which use wrenching language, dramatic exaggeration, and figurative speech. The Psalms were a part of the ordinary life, of the Israelites. The scriptures record a number of times, when the people spontaneously responded to God, with a Psalm of praise. Psalm 71 is a song of “lament.” In a song of “lament,” we hear the strong, emotional words of sufferers. These are words written by *real* people, in very difficult situations.

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Have you ever been in a situation where you felt like your enemies’ were winning? How did you respond? How does the songwriter respond in Psalm 71?
2. The songwriter cries out to God in hope and faith, despite his confusion over how circumstances seem to be unfolding: describe a confusing situation you have gone through. It is amazing that even in confusion, he is still able to confess his trust in God—how difficult is it for you to trust God when you are confused about what is going on in your life? Share this with your group.
3. Throughout this lament, he promises to praise God anyway. Have you reached the point where you are able to give praise to God no matter what happens? How did you get there?

CHALLENGE: Suffering is a heady challenge for anybody. Take a moment to remember your last season of suffering; now give God praise for your ability to endure it and what you learned while you were going through it.

CHAMPION TIP: As a group champion, your role is to “shepherd” the members of your group. Take a moment now to think about those that may be suffering or in pain, pray for them and ask God to show you ways the group might support them during this season.