

Why it's tough going God's way

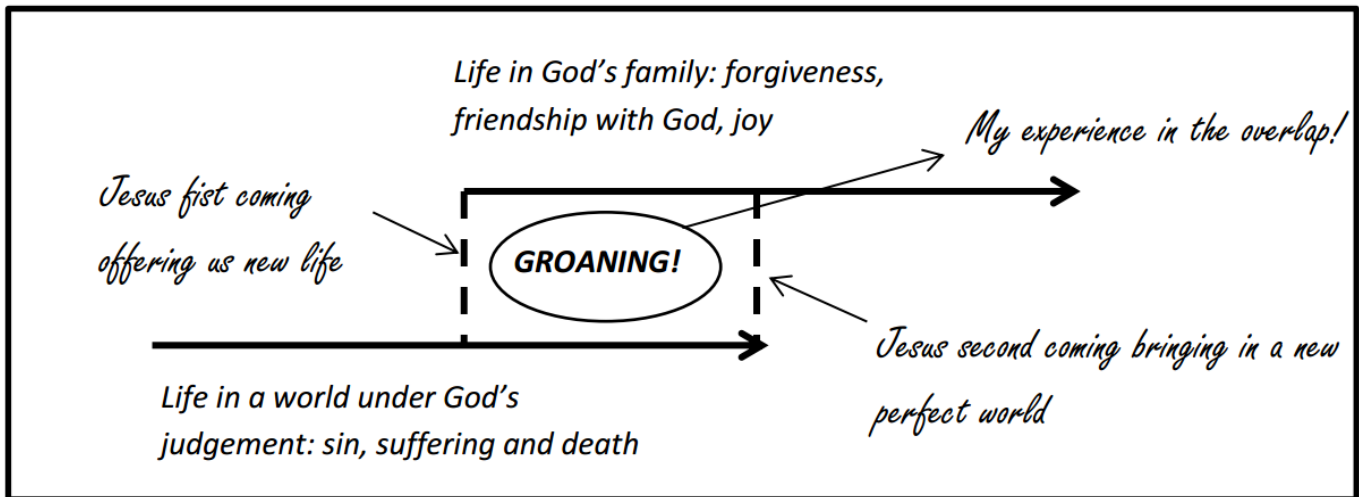
Living in relationship with God- session 7

Jesus' Sales Pitch



*"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself, take up his cross daily and follow me." **Luke 9:23***

Life in the overlap (Romans 8:18-25, p. 1135)



"We don't not want you to be uninformed brothers about the hardships we suffered in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired even of life."

The Apostle Paul, 2 Cor. 1:8

- a. Christians have *already* been accepted into God's family (v1)

b. Christians are *still* waiting for their full redemption (v18-21)

c. The wait in the 'overlap' is marked by groaning (v22-25)

2. Why life in the overlap is hard

a. Hardship is caused by the general brokenness of the world

b. Hardship is caused by the opposition of the world, the flesh, and the devil

i. The world (*John 15:18-19, p. 1083*)

"Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God"

James 4:4

ii. The flesh

"Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul" 1 Peter 2:11

iii. The devil

What has happened to the devil: *"Jesus shared in our humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death- that is the devil" Hebrews 2:14*

What will happen to the devil: *"The devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulphur"" Revelation 20:10*

3. God uses the hardships of the 'overlap' for our good

a. To make us more like Jesus (John 15:1-2, p. 1083)

"If God is allowing you to go through hardship, it's not because he doesn't care. It's because he does."

b. To bring us into closer fellowship with Jesus (1 Peter 4:12-16, p. 1220)

"I have told you these things so that **in me** you may have peace. **In this world** you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." **John 17:33**

Small Groups – The world, the flesh and the devil

John 15:18-25, 1 Peter 2:11, Ephesians 6:10-20

Next Time

Next time we'll be thinking about how knowing God frees us from anxiety

Main passages: 1 John 3:1-3, Ephesians 1:3-5, Hebrews 12:7-13

Bible-studies: Matthew 6:19-34

Some questions to get you going-

- What are the chief causes of anxiety in your life?
- What different solutions does Jesus offer in Matthew 6?

Taking it further

Memory Verse

If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself, take up his cross daily and follow me.

Luke 9:23

Further Bible-study- Hebrews 12:1-13

Following Jesus is described as a race.

Look at 12:1-3

- What makes a race hard?
- In the Christian race what kind of things might 'hinder us'?
- How does sin entangle us?
- How will looking at Jesus encourage us to keep going in this race?

Look at 12:4-13

- What should we see hardship in the Christian life as?
- What does hardship show about how God is treating us?
 - How might that be a counterintuitive thing to think?
 - What do we think about parents who never discipline their children?
- What are the benefits of God's discipline? (v10-11)

For the book-worms

<i>Did the devil make me do it?</i>	Mike McKinley	A short book digging into the Bible's teaching about the devil and evil forces
<i>Battles Christians face</i>	Vaughan Roberts	A practical book on some of the main battles that we face as Christians
<i>The enemy within</i>	Kris Lundgard	A short and practical book about fighting sin in our lives.
<i>The roots of endurance</i>	John Piper	A series of three short biographies about John Newton, Charles Simeon and William Wilberforce: Christians who endured much