

God of the Hills and Valleys

Small Group Guide

Warm-up Question: (Choose one, make up your own, or skip this part all together, depending upon the nature of your group.)

1. What's the highest hill or mountain you've ever been on?
2. What are three things you are thankful for?

Read the following passage: 1 Kings 20:13-34.

In the ancient near east, deities were thought to have limited jurisdiction and limited power. It wasn't unreasonable for the Arameans to think that the "gods" of Israel were "gods of the hills," but not gods of the valleys. We, too, might think that God is only with us when we're doing things right or experiencing success. But God is always with his people. Paul's letter to the Romans reminds us, "...neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:38-39)

Questions for Discussion (Choose several that are relevant for your group):

1. When you find yourself experiencing loneliness, sorrow, pain, or weariness, do you typically seek God more diligently or do you tend to pull back? Explain.
2. Most of the people we read about in the Scriptures had significant moments of failure. How do you respond when the difficulty you're experiencing is something you have primarily brought upon yourself? Do you own it? Do you get depressed? Do you ask God for forgiveness? Explain.
3. Are you comfortable expressing sadness to the people around you? What does mourning look like for you?
4. What are some practical ways we can reignite hope when we're beginning to feel disillusioned or depressed?
5. What are some things we can learn through our "valley" experiences?
6. Two of the most important resources God has given to us are the Word of God and the people of God. To what extent are you gaining strength from these resources in your life right now?
7. What is one area of your life in which you would like to experience greater hope? What might you do to find greater hope in this area?

Pray