

# TALK IT OVER

## Facing Darkness, Finding Hope

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Open your group in prayer, and remember that this is only a guide. Feel free to discuss each of the provided questions in the message notes, or simply dive deeper into just one. Before you close with prayer, take a few minutes to look over the Three Essential Questions towards the end of the document.

## Message Notes

### 1. God has concealed riches in the darkness of suffering

#### • So that you may know

##### Talk It Over

*"He(God) wrapped himself in a trench coat of black rain-cloud darkness." 2 Samuel 22:12 (MsgB)*

*"God has blocked my path and turned my light to darkness." Job 19:8 (LB)*

*"Answer me, O Lord my God; give me light in my darkness lest I die." Psalm 13:3 (LB)*

*"He knows the way I take, and when he has tried me, I shall come forth as gold." Job 23:10 (NASB)*

*"I will give you the treasures of darkness, riches hidden in secret places, so that you may know that I am the Lord, the God of Israel, who summons you by name." Isaiah 45:3 (NIV)*

##### Question 1

Psalm 13:3 shows us how lost we may feel and how distorted our thinking may become when we are in pain and grief. According to Isaiah 45:3, God gives us *"the treasures of darkness, riches hidden in secret places,"* so that we may know.... Know what? What do the verses above tell us about how God has concealed riches in the darkness of suffering?

### 2. God has the power to intervene in our darkness.

##### Talk It Over

*"These trials are only to test your faith, to show that it is strong and pure. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold—and your faith is far more precious to God than mere gold. So if your faith remains strong after being tried by fiery trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world." 1 Peter 1:7 (NLT)*

*"The high and lofty one who lives in eternity, the Holy One, says this: "I live in that high and holy place with those whose spirits are contrite and humble." Isaiah 57:15a (NLT)*

*Great is our Lord, and abundant in power; his understanding is beyond measure."*

*Psalm 147:4,5 (ESV)*

##### Question 2

Read 1 Peter 1:7 aloud. What is the gold that God is producing in your trials? How have your trials helped you to know that God has the power to intervene in your darkness?

### **Question 3**

Jeremiah cried out to God, *"Sovereign Lord, you made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm, nothing is too hard for you."* Jeremiah 32:17 (NIV). Share examples when God supernaturally intervened in circumstances that appeared hopeless.

## **3. God will be close to us in our darkness**

### **• What we know leads us to worship**

#### **Talk It Over**

*"...so we could seek after God, and not just grope around in the dark but actually find him. He doesn't play hide-and-seek with us. He's not remote; he's near."* Acts 17:27b (MsgB)

*"Now we see but a poor reflection; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known."* 1 Corinthians 13:12 (NIV)

*"At this, Job got up and tore his robe and shaved his head. Then he fell to the ground in worship and said: 'Naked I came from my mother's womb and naked I will depart. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised.'"* Job 1:20-21 (NIV)

### **Question 4**

Intimacy is knowing and being known. God says in Isaiah 45:3: *"I am the Lord..., who summons you by name."* What does 1 Corinthians 13:12 above tell us about how close God is to us in our darkness and how we will know him in the future? What expectations do you have, knowing that you will see Jesus face-to-face one day?

### **Question 5**

Our faith teaches us that God has concealed riches in the darkness of suffering, has the power to intervene in our pain, and promises to always be close to us. Praise and worship is a choice we can make to draw close to God. How does praise and worship help us do this? What other resources has God made available to help us to sense him in our darkness?

## **There are many things you can praise God for even in pain as Job did:**

- That He is a good and loving God (*Job 10:12*)
- That He notices every detail of my life (*Job 23:10; 31:4*)
- That He is in control (*Job 34:13*)
- That He has a plan for my life (*Job 23:14*)

## **Treasures in the Darkness:**

#### **Talk It Over**

*"Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life.'" John 8:12 (ESV)*

*"Lord, you have brought light to my life; my God, you light up my darkness."* Psalm 18:28 (NLT)

### **Question 6**

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There are many things you can praise God for even in darkness. For example what are the promises in the verses above with regard to God bringing you light? Job, while in pain, praised God for being a good and loving God, for noticing every detail of his life, and for having a plan for his life. Talk about how your faith that leads to praise and worship has been a treasure through this pandemic, bringing light not only to your relationship with God, but also with others.

### Three Essential Questions`

The following questions are intended to be open-ended and encourage members to consider how they felt and what they, or the group, can do as a result of hearing the message!

1. **What did you hear?** *What point in this message was most impactful for you?*
2. **What do you think?** *How did this message challenge, change, or affirm your thinking?*
3. **What will you do?** *How will you or your group put into practice what you've learned today?*

### Action Steps

1. If you committed your life to Christ for the first time, text NEWSTART to 99000 or email [newstart@saddleback.com](mailto:newstart@saddleback.com).
2. You can give your tithes and offerings online at <https://saddleback.com/give>.  
Your generosity is feeding tens of thousands of out-of-work families during Covid-19.
3. Receive free New Believer material:  
Text NEWSTART (1 word) to 99000 or email [newstart@saddleback.com](mailto:newstart@saddleback.com).
4. Join an online small group for fellowship during COVID-19.  
Text SMALLGROUP to 99000 or email [smallgroup@saddleback.com](mailto:smallgroup@saddleback.com).

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