

## LIFE GROUP APPLICATION QUESTIONS

## *Psalms Series*

These questions are for the **November 6, 2022**, sermon, "Prayer and Pain." Please read the sermon passage (Psalm 102) together out loud.

### Passage Outline

#### **AS WE CONSIDER CONTRASTING VIEWS OF PAIN AND SUFFERING, NOTE**

1. The downward trajectory due to temporal thinking. (1-11)
  - a. When we suffer, we can invest it, spend it, or waste it. We are called to invest!
  - b. Note the 26 references to "I," and "me" that comes when we focus on suffering.
  - c. While pain may be controlled, suffering is universal. We will suffer.
  - d. And when we suffer, we can forget God's benefits, and even accuse of forgetting us.
  - e. We may become distressed (2), struck down (4) and forget to eat (4-5).
2. The upward trajectory due to eternal thinking. (12-22)
  - a. The turning point to invest our suffering: "But You, O LORD."
  - b. It is crucial that we remember the LORD and turn our attention to his throne.
    - i. When everything is wrong, God is right.
    - ii. When we focus on God, we can STOP obsessing about ourselves.
    - iii. When we pray to God in heaven, we have hope for a secure tomorrow.

### Life Group Discussion Questions

1. Based on #1, above: When we focus on our own suffering, we will be become obsessed about the "when" question: "When will my suffering end?" What are some realistic ways to stop focusing on my suffering? How is praying affected when we focus on our own suffering?
2. Based on #1, above: We may need some time to process our suffering a little bit (like the psalmist when writing vv 1-11). How can weeping (1-3), forgetting to eat (4), loneliness (5-7) and ongoing opposition (8) actually teach us something positive about our days in this life?
3. Based on #2, above: This sufferer calls to mind two things: God rules (enthroned, v. 12) and he will continue to rule "forever." Discuss how this mindset may help us faithfully endure suffering. Remember that suffering is temporary, but heaven is perfect forever.
4. Based on #2, above: But we are not instructed to merely endure suffering and pain. The psalmist is teaching us that God answers prayer, and relieves suffering, even in this life. He works his good intentions for nations and individuals alike. Watch how he raises us nations (13) and "regards the prayer of the destitute." (17) Do you think your closest friends / family know that you completely trust God to deliver you (us) from every affliction? Why? Why not?