

discussion guide for march 18th

“Staking a Claim On the Past”

Psalm 77 (p. 728-DSB*)

GRIND IT
BREW IT
DRINK IT
SAVOR IT



"Yes, I try to find **common ground** with everyone." 1 Corinthians 9:22b NLT

➤ **GRIND IT** (11:00 am)

When trouble, trials, tribulation, and testing hits our life like a meteor strike, we are neither helpless nor hopeless. We have choices: before, during, and after. Before, we can worry or we can worship. During, we can trust or we can tremble. After, we can be better for the experience, or we can be bitter over the experience. Psalm 77 is one man’s journey.

- What special resources would you say a believer in Christ has sustaining him through tough times?
- How would you complete this sentence, “When the hard times come in life, I _____”
- Everyone has “tough times.” Take a few minutes to share a trial you experienced and insights on what “got you through it.” (May be ongoing!!)

*“DSB” - The “Discovery Study Bibles” on common ground tables.

➤ **BREW IT** (11:10 am)

1. Troubles Described – Vs 1-9

[Espresso: We’ve all experienced the physical, emotional, and spiritual symptoms of troubled times.]

- ☐ Read Psalm 77:1-9 (p. 728, DSB*). List phrases from these verses describing the physical symptoms of Asaph’s troubled times. (emotional) (spiritual)
 - Do people in our modern culture experience similar symptoms to those described by Asaph?
 - In your opinion, which of the 3 symptom areas above is the hardest to deal with? Why?
 - Can troubles/trials serve a purpose? What? How?
 - In what ways is the experience of going through tough times the same for all people? In what ways is it different for the believer in Christ?

2. Victories Remembered – Vs 10-20

[Espresso: Remembering who God is and where He displayed His power, care, and provision in the past enables us to trust Him fully in the present.]

- ☐ Read Psalm 77:10-20 (p. 728, DSB*). To what does Asaph appeal? What does he remember about God? What example did he use? How did this help him?
 - How does hearing about times when God has moved among other people help you undergo serious trouble now?
 - How does remembering times when God has brought personal victory in your life help you undergo serious trouble now?
 - How does remembering past victories help you face the future when you suspect it will have even greater trials than the past?

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➤ DRINK IT (11:40 am)



Psalm 77 ends and we don't really know if Asaph's faith has been restored. Where you are? Pick a number on the scale. _____ If you are saying, "I know how to freshen my faith, it's by remembering how God has worked in my life in the past," you have a decision to make. You can continue to live in the malaise of feeling your faith isn't as strong or vibrant as it should be, or you can choose to fully trust in the God who saw you through tough times in the past, or has proven His faithfulness to His people throughout history.

Remember the rain last week? Wasn't it refreshing? I could just imagine grass, plants, and trees rejoicing as the fresh rain fell on their parched leaves. What about you, do you need the fresh rain of faith. There is power in the past – remember – drink it in. If God seems far away, who moved? Where are you on the faith scale today? ____ Where would you like to be? _____

Prayer Time: (11:45 am)

- Pray for needs of people outside the group.
- Pray for needs of members in the group.
- Pray for absentees by name. Consider giving someone a call this afternoon.

Go Deeper: Use the *"Savor"* section this week in your personal daily devotionals to reinforce the commonground experience.

➤ SAVOR IT (all week long)

Last Sunday you saw remembering God's activity in the past can renew and restore faith in the power of God in the present, and give hope for the future. These readings should help reinforce that truth.

Monday, March 19: Read Deuteronomy 4:9-14, (p. 219-DSB*). What did Moses want? Why? What did Moses say to help motivate the people? What do you need to remember?

Tuesday, March 20: Read Isaiah 26:3-4, (p. 898-DSB*). What is the relationship of peace and trust? What do you need to do when the trials come? What does it mean to have a "steadfast" mind?

Wednesday, March 21: Read Isaiah 43:1-2, (p. 925-DSB*). The promises of God are for those He calls "mine." If you belong to God, what promises does He make in these verses? How do these affect the future?

Thursday, March 22: Read Hebrews 13:6-7, (p. 1626-DSB*). We know man is capable of all kinds of evil. Even in the face of all this, what can we say? Who can we look to as examples? From whom can we draw strength? Who do we need to remember to freshen our faith?

Friday, March 23: Read Romans 8:38-39, (p. 1498-DSB*). The ability to withstand the trials of life is rooted in faith. When faith is tested, how convinced are you of the truth in these verses?

*"DSB" refers to "Discovery Study Bibles" available in common ground.