DON’T ASK “WHY”
ASK “WHAT”

PART 1

SESSION 1
Everybody has experiences.

We live in a fallen world and bad things happen to bad people. And bad things happen to good people.

THREE OBSERVATIONS ABOUT LIFE

1. Trials are.

In a fallen world bad times are not a possibility, they are a promise.

BELOVED, DO NOT BE SURPRISED AT THE FIERY ORDEAL AMONG YOU, WHICH COMES UPON YOU FOR YOUR TESTING, AS THOUGH SOME STRANGE THING WERE HAPPENING TO YOU;

1 PETER 4:12 (NASB)

“THESE THINGS I HAVE SPOKEN TO YOU, THAT IN ME YOU MAY HAVE PEACE. IN THE WORLD YOU WILL HAVE TRIBULATION; BUT BE OF GOOD CHEER, I HAVE OVERCOME THE WORLD.”

JOHN 16:33 (NKJV)

EVERYONE WHO WANTS TO LIVE A GODLY LIFE IN UNION WITH CHRIST JESUS WILL BE PERSECUTED; AND EVIL PERSONS AND IMPOSTORS WILL KEEP ON GOING FROM BAD TO WORSE, DECEIVING OTHERS AND BEING DECEIVED THEMSELVES.

2 TIMOTHY 3:12-13 (GN)
2. Trials tend to make us or _____________________________.

3. Victims fail to move beyond asking “why” and remain _____________________ in their pain.

To ask “why” briefly is normal but to stay there is lethal.

THREE REASONS FOR MOVING BEYOND “WHY” TO “WHAT”

1. Theological reason.

There are some questions this side of heaven you are never going to know.

2. Emotional reason.

Anger, guilt and second guessing leads to being emotionally paralyzed.

3. Pragmatic reason.

It just doesn’t do any good.
The key to moving through your broken world experience is to ask “what” instead of “why.”

JAMES, A BOND-SERVANT OF GOD AND OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, TO THE TWELVE TRIBES WHO ARE DISPERSED ABROAD: GREETINGS.

CONSIDER IT ALL JOY, MY BRETHREN, WHEN YOU ENCOUNTER VARIOUS TRIALS, KNOWING THAT THE TESTING OF YOUR FAITH PRODUCES ENDURANCE. AND LET ENDURANCE HAVE ITS PERFECT RESULT, SO THAT YOU MAY BE PERFECT AND COMPLETE, LACKING IN NOTHING.

JAMES 1:1-4 (NASB)

THREE IMPORTANT QUESTIONS SPIRITUAL CONQUERORS ASK

1. What can I control?

Answer: your __________________ (v.2)

“EVERYTHING CAN BE TAKEN FROM A MAN BUT ONE THING, THE LAST OF HUMAN FREEDOMS, TO CHOOSE ONE’S ATTITUDE IN ANY GIVEN SET OF CIRCUMSTANCES.”

VICTOR FRANKL

You have ________________ control of your attitude.
TALK IT OVER

1. What is an area in your life right now that qualifies as a trial?
   
   ____________________________________________________________
   
   ____________________________________________________________
   
   ____________________________________________________________

2. Share a negative experience in your past that (although difficult) has had positive results in your life.
   
   ____________________________________________________________
   
   ____________________________________________________________
   
   ____________________________________________________________

3. Chip said that it is naïve to think life is fair and if you do good and obey God, life will be good to you. How does the Bible paint a different picture of life? Can you think of some verses or passages that speak to this issue?
   
   ____________________________________________________________
   
   ____________________________________________________________
   
   ____________________________________________________________

4. Who is someone that allowed their trials to “make” them instead of “break” them? How did their trial “make” them?
   
   ____________________________________________________________
   
   ____________________________________________________________
   
   ____________________________________________________________
5. Chip said “To ask ‘why’ briefly is normal but to stay there is lethal. How can it be lethal to stay focused on “why”?

__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________

6. There are some questions this side of heaven that are never going to be answered. What question have you been carrying that isn’t going to be answered until you get to heaven?

__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________

7. What helpful counsel would you give a person who keeps focusing on the fact that they are a “victim”?

__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________

LIVE IT OUT

This week spend some time meditating on James 1:1-4. You might want to copy these verses on a card and place them somewhere you will see them every day.