

Sermon-Based Small Group Preparation

For the week of November 2, 2014

“When Life is Unfair”

Sermon Series: *Bulletproof* (week 1 of 3)

2 Thessalonians 1:1–12

» Please look over these questions *before* your Small Group meeting «

Getting Started

10 minutes

- 1) Which would you prefer to do, if you needed to clear your head or regain perspective: take a walk, read a book, hit the gym, other?

Key Concept

Life is unfair. A solid-as-steel faith, one that trusts in God’s goodness, makes all the difference in how we respond when trouble hits.

Into the Bible

20 minutes

- 2) If you can relate to feeling like the “sugar cookie,” mentioned in this week’s sermon, discuss your response to the following statement: “If you want to change the world, get over being a sugar cookie and keep moving forward.”

Read 2 Thessalonians 1:1–12 (all scripture texts are in the *Additional Resource*)

- 3) Paul praises God for the new Christians in Thessalonica. What is the character trait he finds most commendable in this group of believers?

- 4) Paul acknowledges the persecution and trials faced by the Thessalonian believers (v. 4). We use those words interchangeably, sometimes. But, what can be some of the differences between a “spiritual trial” and “spiritual persecution?”

Reread 2 Thessalonians 1:5–12

- 5) Paul’s challenge can be paraphrased, “Look past today at what’s coming your way.” Which promises in these verses affirm this truth?

Digging Deeper

40 minutes

Read James 1:2–4

- 6) Coupled with Paul’s words to the Thessalonians, what insights could these verses from the book of James give you about your perspective towards unfair, painful situations?

Read 2 Peter 3:9

- 7) When God chooses to delay justice towards those who harm his children, who benefits?

- 8) Are you able to trust that you will receive benefits by allowing God to settle the score? Why or why not?

