

Growth Group Discussion Q's

February 1, 2026

Fun Discussion Starter: Do you have plans to watch the Superbowl this Sunday? Who do you want to win?

Checking in...

- Last week we went over five ways we can posture our attitude when life goes wrong.
 - **Be Kind, Re-Align** – Frustration and disappointment are normal responses when life throws us a curve. It is important to be kind to your heart by allowing space for these emotions before we take the necessary next step of re-alignment to the reality of our situation.
 - **Be Humble** – God knows far more about our circumstances than we do. Maybe there's something going on that we have yet to understand.
 - **Be Patient** – When our plans are thwarted, we need to slow down and pay attention. Let God's work play out.
 - **Be Open** – It is helpful to hold our plans with open hands so that if something goes wrong, we can be flexible.
 - **Be Loyal** – Trust God who loves us. He is at work in us and through our circumstances for our good.
- How are you doing with these mindsets?

Message Review: Is God Punishing Me?

When things go wrong in our life, we can sometimes be prone to ask, "Is God punishing me?" The short answer is "probably not." God is kind, compassionate and patient toward us. However, as a loving Father, he does allow us to experience the negative consequences of our choices. The goal of this is to draw us to himself and to transform us to be more like Jesus.

Consider the Mercy of God

- Read Ps 103:9-14
- What does this passage tell us about the character of God toward us even though we fall short in our loyalty to him?

Punishment vs Discipline

- Punishment focuses on modifying our behavior, whereas discipline focuses on shaping our character (our heart). The first is externally enforced to punish wrongdoing and limit evil. The second implies a loving relationship in which the heart of a person is being developed and nurtured to produce good.
- Punishment or wrongdoing and discipline to nurture good can feel very similar. How does our understanding of God as our loving and merciful father help us to discern between the two?
- Read 1Peter 4:15-17

- How would you differentiate between punishment and discipline in this passage?
- Read Galatians 6:7-8
- How does God use the natural consequences of our actions to shape our heart?
- Can you think of a time when you experienced a painful result of your choice yet, as you look back, you are grateful for what it produced in you later?

How should we respond when we sin? Confess and repent (turn back)

- Read 1John 1:9
- What happens when we confess (take responsibility for) our sin to God? How does God respond?
- In Genesis 3, after Adam and Eve sinned in the garden, they hid from Him (3:8). This is a natural response to shame. Do you relate to this impulse of hiding?
- Notice how God moves *toward* Adam and Eve to pursue them though they try to hide (3:9). In light of our study which draws attention to God's parental heart toward us, what do you think God's goal was in pursuing Adam and Eve?
- What were the consequences of their choice to reject God's command? In what ways did God speak hope and redemption to them?
- Why is repentance (turning back to God) necessary for our reconciliation?

Final Thoughts

- In what ways has this study caused you to rethink some of your views about God and our sin?
- What aspects of this study drew you nearer to God?
- Did God communicate something to your heart that you needed to hear?