

# LET'S DO **Difficult**

A SMALL GROUP STUDY

## Session 1: Jesus Did Difficult Things

*Be like Jesus. Live like Jesus. What would Jesus do?* These are phrases we know well, but have we truly considered what they demand of us? Jesus lived a life marked by hardship, rejection, opposition, and suffering—so living like Him may bring the same things to our lives. Growth requires obedience, and obedience often requires courage. Are you willing to embrace difficulty to know your Savior more deeply? Are you willing to stand firm in the face of opposition for the sake of advancing His Kingdom? Are you willing to give—and receive—more than you ever thought possible in pursuit of eternal reward? If so, it's time to set aside the easy path and lean fully into the challenges before us as we pursue the Lord's best—together.

### **Scriptures**

Mark 10:32–34 (NIV®)

*They were on their way up to Jerusalem, with Jesus leading the way, and the disciples were astonished, while those who followed were afraid. Again he took the Twelve aside and told them what was going to happen to him. “We are going up to Jerusalem,” he said, “and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will hand him over to the Gentiles, who will mock him and spit on him, flog him and kill him. Three days later he will rise.”*

Mark 1:35 (NIV®)

*Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.*

### **Discussion Questions**

1. As Christians, our goal in life is to be like Jesus. Since Jesus' life was extremely difficult, we should expect similar trials in our lives. What is your initial reaction to the false idea that being a Christian is meant to be easy and blessed all the time? Have you believed this in the past? How did it impact your faith?
2. What does your prayer life look like right now? What would you like it to look like? How can you make this change a reality, and what benefits would come from actually doing this?
3. Influential critics tried to silence Jesus. Who are the people in your life that carry the most influence and would be most likely to silence you? Do you need to take steps to lessen their influence in matters with eternal consequences? How can you do this?
4. The leaders in Jesus' time were waiting and watching for Him to make a mistake or do something wrong. What examples do you see of this happening in our culture today? Have you ever been guilty of watching and waiting for others to mess up, just so you can point out their faults?
5. In the current political climate, people become caught up in personalities rather than focusing on policy. When has this happened to you? What can you do to stay focused on a biblical worldview when considering what actions to take in your community?
6. Share a specific situation when you felt called to speak for Jesus. How can we encourage other believers to speak up for Jesus?

## **Going Deeper**

1. There are many times throughout the Bible where God's people (not pagans!) forfeited the God-opportunities right in front of them and received the judgment of God. Provide an example of when you unfortunately experienced this in your own life. What would you do differently if presented with the same situation again?
2. Jesus was deeply distressed at the stubborn hearts of those who turned away from Him. Would He be deeply distressed with your stubbornness in a specific area of your life? Do you wear stubbornness as a badge of honor?
3. How do you understand God's role in healing? How can you support those around you in faith and prayer for healing?

## **Prayer**

Take a moment to say the prayer below aloud together. Then, keep it nearby to read on your own throughout the upcoming week.

*Heavenly Father, I choose to follow You. Please help me to take up my cross daily, setting aside the things of this world that are temporary and unable to satisfy, focusing instead on You and doing Your work. Lord, I know that following You will require hard work, sacrifices, and a willingness to do difficult things—fill me with the strength and perseverance I need to run the race You have marked out for me and to represent You well. I know that You will never leave me nor forsake me and that no matter what this world may bring, You are greater and You have overcome this world. In Jesus' name, amen.*

## **Proclamation for Healing**

If you or someone you know needs healing, read this proclamation aloud daily, like medicine:

*Dear Lord, I proclaim today what Your Word says: no weapon or sickness formed against me shall prosper. Those who have spoken against me or rejected me, I choose now to forgive them and bless them in the name of Jesus. I declare, O Lord, that You and You alone are my God and beside You there is no other; a just God and a Savior, the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, and I worship You. I submit myself afresh to You today in unreserved obedience. Having submitted to You, Lord, I do as Your Word directs. I resist the devil: all his pressures, his attacks, his deceptions, and every instrument or agent he would seek to use against me. I do not submit! I resist him. Drive him from me, and exclude him from me in Jesus' name. Specifically, I reject and repel every infirmity, infection, pain, inflammation, malignancy, allergy, virus, every form of witchcraft, and every type of stress (name any specific sickness). Your Word has become flesh; for You sent Your Word and healed me. Through Your Word and Your Son, Jesus Christ, You have imparted Your life into me. I thank You that through the blood of Jesus Christ, my body is restored and that I may praise You with every breath I breathe and every word I speak. I thank You that through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, I have passed out from under the curse and entered into the blessings of Abraham, whom You blessed in all things: exaltation, health, prosperity, victory, God's favor, and God's friendship. In Jesus' name, amen.*



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