**LifeGroup Study**

**GOOD INTENTIONS BAD IDEAS**

**What Doesn’t Kill You Makes You Weaker?**

**2022-10-16**

**Leader Notes**

**OVERVIEW:**

Welcome to our series, “Good Intentions Bad Ideas”! Over the next three weeks, we’ll be looking at 3 cultural myths that can mess with our minds and how we can see the myths for what they are and live in a different way, the Way of Jesus. Our myth for week 1 is, “What doesn’t kill you makes you weaker.” In our culture we’re taught that people, especially young people, are fragile and will be damaged (weakened) by life’s challenges. Rather than following the myth that we are fragile, this week’s teaching will show us that God has wired us to be “anti-fragile” – people who can grow and become stronger from the stresses life brings. Rather than avoiding life’s difficulties, God has wired us to face them and grow stronger through them. What challenges are you facing these days? How might God help you to become stronger through them? These are the topics we’ll explore in this week’s study.

**ICEBREAKER:** I DOUBLE DARE YA!

Do you remember being “double-dared” as a kid? I’m talking about those times when you were with your friends and thinking about doing something daring, like diving off a board into the pool, or riding your bike over a ramp. You’re thinking of doing it, but you’re scared. Then one of your friends yells out, “I double dare ya!” What’s something you were scared to do as a kid, but then you tried it and loved it (or grew stronger from it)? **Share your story with the group!**

**STUDY:**

1. On Sunday, Pete walked us through the myth, “What doesn’t kill you makes you weaker.” **What was a highlight for you from Pete’s teaching?**
2. Read the following three categories. See if you can come up with a real life example from our culture for each (for example – “Living in the *fragile* category looks like …”) **How does reading these categories help you understand the value of being “anti-fragile”?**
3. Fragile things (fine china, portfolios only invested in a single position, a “why me” mentality) easily break.
4. Robust things (a piece of metal, broadly diversified portfolios, stoicism) endure change.
5. Antifragile things (options, a “failure leads to growth” mentality) benefit from volatility and change.  They actually need stress in order to grow.
6. Read the following quote about being anti-fragile from Nassim Nicholas Taleb . In this definition Taleb builds the case that if complex systems (like human beings) are deprived of difficulties and challenges, it can have a negative impact. **Where do you see the negative impact of avoiding difficulties or challenges happening in our culture? What impact might this be having on us as followers of Jesus?**

“Some things benefit from shocks. They thrive and grow when exposed to volatility, randomness, disorder, and stressors. Depriving complex systems of volatility, randomness, and stressors will harm them. They will weaken, die, or blow up.”

1. READ Acts 14:21-28

In verse 22, Paul and his companions encourage these new believers to remain true to the faith.

**What does it mean to remain true to the faith?**

LEADER NOTE: The word “remain” here is an expression close to the idea of abiding (see John 15:1-7). Part of the idea here is perseverance. To *remain* is to stay true to the One in whom they have put their trust, to hold on to Him, whatever comes their way. Suffering and persecution are to be expected as part of the experience of remaining in Jesus. (see Phil. 1:28-30, 1 Thess. 3:3; 2 Thess. 1:5, Rom. 8:17)

In verse 22 we read, “We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God.”

1. **What hardships had Paul and his companions just gone through?**  (see vs. 19)

LEADER NOTE: In verse 19 we read that some Jews came from Antioch and Iconium and win that crowd over to their way of thinking. As a result, Paul was stoned by the crowd for his preaching about Jesus. This event would have been fresh in Paul’s mind when he reminds these new believers that following Jesus will mean hardships.

In verse 21 we read that Paul and his companions return to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch.

1. **What does this show us about their willingness to face hardships for the sake of the Gospel?**

LEADER NOTE: Their return shows their value on prioritizing the Gospel over their own personal comfort or safety. The shortest route home for them would have been to continue east. Instead of going this way Paul and his companions deliberately retrace their steps, going back to the very place where the Jews came from who incited the crowd to stone Paul. For more on Paul’s willingness to face hardships for the sake of the Gospel, see Romans 5:3-5.

1. Think back to our topic today of “anti-fragile”. **How has your faith benefited or grown from the trials you’ve experienced?**

LEADER NOTE: Encourage your LifeGroup members to think about specific examples of how hardships in life have grown their faith and trust in Jesus. Your group members might think about how their trust in God has grown, or their prayer life has become deeper, or their relationships with others in the church have become more meaningful, as a result of their hardships.

1. What might it look like for you be “anti-fragile” when it comes to your faith? What hard thing could you try? **What new challenge could you take on to grow in this area?**

LEADER NOTE: Rather than going out of our way to avoid or minimize hardships (fragile myth) today’s teaching encourages us to move in the same direction as Paul and his companions did, to be willing to go through hardships as part of our experience of following Jesus. For your group members, a new challenge might involve stretching out of their comfort zone to try something new that will stretch their faith. Ideas might include serving lunch at the Ray of Hope Community Centre, reaching out to a neighbour in need, inviting a co-worker to church, signing up for a mission trip. Encourage your group members to think about a specific example and to form a plan for giving it a try.

Looking for more resources on developing an anti-fragile faith? Check this out! <https://mcgrathblog.nd.edu/developing-anti-fragile-faith>

**PRAYER**

Consider reading the following prayer out loud together as a group.

The Litany of Trust

That You are continually holding me, sustaining me, loving me Jesus, I trust in You.

That Your love goes deeper than my sins and failings and transforms me Jesus, I trust in You.

That not knowing what tomorrow brings is an invitation to lean on You Jesus, I trust in You.

That You are with me in my suffering Jesus, I trust in You.

That my suffering, united to Your own, will bear fruit in this life and the next Jesus, I trust in You.

That You will not leave me orphan, that You are present in Your Church Jesus, I trust in You.

That Your plan is better than anything else Jesus, I trust in You.

That You always hear me and in Your goodness always respond to me Jesus, I trust in You.

That You give me the grace to accept forgiveness and to forgive others Jesus, I trust in You.

That You give me all the strength I need for what is asked Jesus, I trust in You.

That my life is a gift Jesus, I trust in You.

That You will teach me to trust You Jesus, I trust in You.

That You are my Lord and my God Jesus, I trust in You.

That I am Your beloved one Jesus, I trust in You.

Source – <https://sistersoflife.org/litany-of-trust/>