

Overwhelmed No More

Psalm 61

May 9-10, 2020

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Unstoppable Hope

Reflect

Outline: Recap

Realize

Points to Ponder

Respond

Questions to draw out understanding.

REFLECT

From the political tension we feel in our country, to the daily stresses of life at home with our families, or the internal struggles we face individually, there's any number of things we can feel overwhelmed by, every single day. And the more overwhelmed we get, the more we run after the things or people that bring us a sense of comfort...even if those comforts are ultimately bad for us. The beautiful thing about following Jesus is he not only offers us comfort when we feel overwhelmed, he enters into what we're experiencing and endures it with us. This weekend, join us as we let the music of the Psalms bring us an encouragement no earthly circumstances can take away.

[LINK to SMALL GROUP VIDEO MATERIALS](#)

REALIZE

1. Be led higher

- **Leader Notes**

- When we find ourselves weary and at the end of our rope, we often feel like we're supposed to have it all figured out. We settle into this idea that constant unrest and anxiety is normal. The Lord longs to lead us to the place where peace is the norm
 - This "place" is not a setting or a state of mind. Our Rock and our Refuge is Jesus himself. When we feel a need to retreat, it's so easy to search for our peace in temporary things, rather than run to Jesus, our Shelter.
 - Don't forget that David, the writer of this Psalm, had all sorts of issues. David was aware of his shortcomings and his sins, but he cried out to God all the same, and the Lord heard his cry.
 - There is a popular saying that God won't give us more than we can handle. The Bible never actually says this. Life overwhelms us all time, but we will never in this life face more than God can handle.
- **Spend some time reading through Psalm 61. How does David communicate with God? Are you practicing the same kind of honesty in your own prayer life? What is something in your life that is more than you can handle? Spend some time committing that issue in prayer to the Lord.**

2. Shelter in the right place

- **Leader Notes**

- It's no secret that we all turn to different escapes when we are fearful. Often, we will turn to all kinds of temporary comforts to drown out our fear. We know that these attempts don't last, but in our culture they are so convenient.
- When we find ourselves turning to temporary comforts rather than the Lord, we need to identify what we're truly longing for. The Holy Spirit, given to us as our Comforter, longs to lead us back to Jesus and satisfy those deep longings.
- When we realize that our true longing is for Jesus, suddenly our perspective shifts. Our fears must fall at his feet. No temporary comfort will satisfy us. We will long for the comfort that only Jesus can provide.
- **How do you normally handle feelings of being overwhelmed? Who or what do you usually turn to when you are anxious or afraid? What would it look like for you to turn to Jesus instead?**

3. Focus is key

- **Leader Notes**
 - If we find ourselves overwhelmed, we have forgotten to place our fears at the feet of Jesus. (Or maybe we just keep picking them back up.) While the Lord longs to provide the comfort that our soul needs, we have to make room for it. We need to clear away our fears and choose trust.
 - We might believe that God exists, that he is powerful, or that he loves us. But do we believe that he's got everything under control? Very often, in the face of fear, this simple truth escapes us. None of our circumstances have come as a surprise to God.
 - Even if we start to believe this truth, we constantly need to remind ourselves of it. Every day we need to focus back in on the power and the love of God. Every day we need to remind ourselves that he's got this.
- **What daily practices or disciplines can you implement to focus on the Lord in the midst of what you're walking through right now?**

4. Praise and practice

- **Leader Notes**
 - When a season of suffering ends, it is easier to be thankful, to praise God. However, God has offered us comfort right here, in the midst of suffering. Just like David, we need to praise in the here and now.
 - Our sufferings, no matter how difficult, are all temporary. Even if we don't see an end today, they will come to an end. One day they will be over. Praise, on the other hand, is eternal. When our sufferings end, our praise will carry on into the hereafter
 - When we identify the areas where we are most overwhelmed, we have the opportunity to praise. We don't have to wait for the pain or the hurt to stop. We can offer specific praise and thanks to our God right now, believing that he is in control.
- **What are some things you can praise God for right now? What are some overwhelming blessings you see even during an overwhelming season? Whether you've been walking with Jesus for a short time or most of your life, what are some truths you know God is laying on your heart to put into practice more consistently?**

Optional Follow-up Questions:

- What makes you say that?
- How do you feel about that?
- How would you explain your answer to a non-Christian friend or neighbor?
- Why did God design it to work that way? Why not just do (whatever else) instead?

- What would you say to someone who disagrees with that?
- Why do we really have to do it like that? Why can't we just go (some other route) instead?