



## Part 2 Discussion Guide

### Face the Issue:

This week we continued our series on “Is That in the Bible?” as Brian taught us concerning the saying “God will not put on you more than you can bear”. We learned that that particular phrasing is not in the Bible but Scripture does promise us that we will not face temptation beyond what we can resist. Brian focused a lot on the difference between temptation and trials. God does not promise us that we will not have sufferings or trials in our lives. Many times people (maybe even you) think that “getting God” means that things will go blissfully well and that the Christian life is one of continual growth toward spiritual wholeness, with no setbacks or messes along the way. But we all know many strong Christ followers who have faced terrible tragedies and sufferings in their lives (maybe even you).

*What experiences have you or others you know experienced similar to the above? Did they at times even make you wonder where God was?*

*Brian said that God uses tests to lift us up, to strengthen our faith. Think about the times when you have grown spiritually: What conditions led to the spiritual growth? Were they all uplifting and positive? Or have you grown best when your life was being challenged by painful circumstances? What were those circumstances? How did God use them to deepen your faith?*

### Into the Word:

#### Read Exodus 17:1–7

When the Israelites entered the wilderness after leaving Egypt, they complained about the lack of water. They wondered why God had rescued them from Pharaoh just to abandon them in the desert! They’d have rather returned to slavery than endure the dry and awful place. But God had not abandoned the Israelites; in fact, He made provision for them, making water gush from a rock.

In fact, this desert time was when God most entered into a relationship with His people. He made a covenant with them and gave them His law while they were in this desert.

We’ll do anything to avoid pain and discomfort. Spiritually, this means we’d like to live on a continuous mountaintop of happiness with Jesus. But in reality, we usually live in a kind of desert—a time of temptation and trials, a dry place.

*What recently has troubled you? Did you stop to think that whatever it was that made you irritable may actually have been an occasion for God to break into your life?*

Brian also shared that God will always be with you and that in times of our greatest temptations, He will let us know that He is there. It is our job to be looking for and expecting His presence.

**Read 1 Kings 19:1–12.**

Elijah was in a fight for his life: Jezebel was out to kill him, so Elijah ran away. First God led him into a wilderness (kind of like the Israelites). There Elijah was touched by an angel—twice—who brought him food and drink, and then urged him to continue on to the mountain. After he entered a cave, every kind of natural disaster hit: wind, earthquake, and fire. But God was in none of those.

And then there was “a gentle whisper”. Can you imagine what that was like? Can you “hear” it? God, apparently, was in the silence.

God allows us to enter wilderness because sometimes it is the only place where we will stop and listen for what He is trying to say to us or do through us.

*How do you take time to listen to God’s sheer silence? What do you hear when God is most silent? What do you learn about yourself? About God? About your situation?*

*How does God break through to you most effectively?*

**Apply The Word**

“God will not give you more than you can bear”. Sounds nice. These are nice words that people say to others that are going through tough times in order to encourage them to “hang on, it’s gonna be okay”. But the truth is the church should be a place where people don’t have to pretend they’re okay when they’re not. The church should be a place where you can simply say, “I’m in bad shape,” and someone will say, “Tell me about it”.

*How could a church become that kind of place?*

*Think of people who have listened to you when you were down or in desperate straits. What was it about those persons that helped you then?*

*What do you find that helps you find God when you most need Him? Music? Nature? Doing something creative? Talk about it with others.*