



**Discuss\***

- “She said to herself, ‘He has brought me here when I did not want to come for his own purpose. I, too, will look up into his face and say, ‘Behold me! I am thy little handmaiden Acceptance-with-Joy’” (Hannah Hurnard, *Hind’s Feet on High Places*, p. 45).

Can you think of a time that God brought you to a place that you did not want to go? How did He use that experience for His own purpose? A job, a mission trip, a relationship, something else?

- Read Luke 1:46-55. How do you see acceptance with joy in Mary’s response to God’s calling?
- Acceptance with joy sounds and looks a lot like peace. Remembering Paul’s outlook in Philippians 4:11-13, read Philippians 4:8-9. What are some of the key elements that Paul mentions that result in peace (acceptance with joy)?
- “...in all things God works...” (Romans 8:28). What areas of your spiritual life do you view as **your** work to accomplish and what areas of your spiritual life do you view as **God’s** work to accomplish?

*(This is a “diagnostic” question, not a right or wrong question. Be honest. Understanding how we hold a view of success and failure can help you see that God is working in all things. Hint: All is God’s work. Our work is to be receptive to what God is doing, not to do it.)*

- Talk about the following quote and examine it. How does this idea change your perspective of what is “good” and what is “bad” in your circumstances and life?

“Everything is a grace, everything is the direct effect of our Father’s love—difficulties, contradictions, humiliations, all the soul’s miseries, her burdens, her needs—everything, because through them, she learns humility, realizes her weakness. Everything is a grace because everything is God’s gift. Whatever be the character of life or its unexpected events—to the heart that loves, all is well” (St. Terese of Lisieux).

- “...to be conformed to the image of Christ...” Read Hebrews 2:10. How has God used your sufferings to conform you to the image of Christ? How can you become a more willing participant in this process in the midst of sufferings? How has God used these present global “sufferings” to conform you to the image of Christ?

*“Never let a good crisis go to waste” (Winston Churchill).*