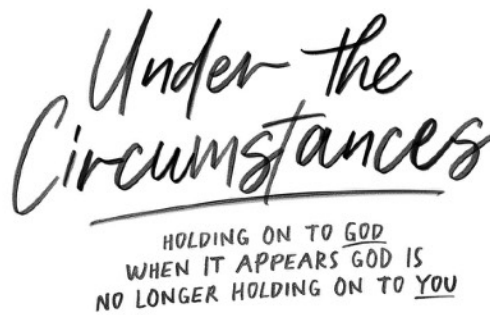




Under the Circumstances – Week 4

Small Group Discussion Guide

Title: God Is With You

Main Idea: Don't confuse God's silence with His absence.

INTRODUCTION

Life doesn't always make sense. Sometimes it feels like God is distant, silent... or even absent. This week, we looked at the life of Joseph — a man who experienced betrayal, injustice, temptation, abandonment, and prison — and yet Scripture says, again and again, "The Lord was with Joseph." If you've ever felt forgotten by God, Joseph's story is for you.

WARM-UP QUESTIONS

- Have you ever been wrongly blamed for something or overlooked when you did the right thing? What emotions did that stir in you?
- What kinds of situations make you feel like God is silent or distant?
- Which quote from the message or slides stood out to you the most, and why?

DIGGING INTO SCRIPTURE

Read Genesis 39:1–23 together.

"The Lord was with Joseph..." (v.2, v.3, v.21, v.23)

- What do you notice about the repetition of that phrase in this chapter? Why do you think the author included it?
- How did Joseph act differently because he believed God was with him?
- In verse 9, Joseph resists temptation. What role does God's presence play in his decision?
- Verses 20–23 describe Joseph's time in prison. Would you describe those circumstances as "blessed"? Why or why not?
- Read Genesis 50:19–20: 'You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good...'
- How does Joseph interpret his story differently at the end than he might have in the middle?
- What's the danger of trying to interpret your life in real time?

APPLICATION

As if God were with you...

- Flee temptation
- Work hard
- Speak truth
- Forgive
- What do you tend to confuse for God's absence? (Silence? Suffering? Delays?)
- Which of the four actions stood out most for you this week? Why?
- What would it look like for you to live as if you were absolutely confident that God is with you — at work, at home, in your relationships?
- Can you think of a "Joseph moment" in your past where you now recognize God was at work, even though you couldn't see it at the time?

QUOTES FOR REFLECTION

- "Don't confuse God's silence with His absence." – Under the Circumstances
- "The Lord was with Joseph... but nothing changed." – Under the Circumstances
- "What would you do if you were absolutely confident God was with you?" – Under the Circumstances
- "God's plans for you do not hinge on your understanding of them." – Under the Circumstances
- "There is only one thing worse than disappointment with God: disappointment without God." – Philip Yancey

CLOSING CHALLENGE

This week, look for God's fingerprints in places you might otherwise miss them. He may not change your circumstances right away — but He is with you. Journal or reflect daily on this question:

"Where did I see God today?"

End your time by inviting group members to pray for trust — especially in the areas where God seems silent.