



OURLIGHT BIBLE STUDY — LEADER COMPANION

Faith Under Trial

Leader Companion for the 6-week study — pair this with the main packet.

This companion is for group leaders only — it is not additional content for participants. For each week, it repeats a short context recap, then the facilitation notes that live outside the main packet: what to watch for as a session unfolds, and how to respond. It deliberately does not include model answers to the Discussion Questions — the guidance below is meant to help you recognize a substantive answer and a shallow one, not to hand you a script to read from. You are still expected to work the text yourself before leading it.



OURLIGHT BIBLE STUDY — WEEK 1 OF 6

The Purpose of Trials

Leader Companion — Week 1 of “Faith Under Trial.”

Study aim: The group should understand that trials are not random but purposeful — used by God to test, refine, and mature genuine faith — and should respond by fixing their hope on the eternal glory that outweighs present affliction, rather than on the removal of the trial itself. — Scripture Anchor: James 1:2–4 (ESV)

Leader Notes

Moment	Watch For	Direction
Opening	Participants may hear "count it all joy" as a command to feel happy about hardship, which can produce guilt when they don't feel joyful.	Clarify that James commands a settled judgment about the trial's purpose, not an emotional performance — joy here is confidence in what God is doing, not the absence of grief (see 1 Peter 1:6, "grieved... yet you rejoice").
Doctrine	The group may treat "testing" as God finding out whether faith is real, as if the outcome is uncertain to Him.	Clarify that testing proves faith's genuineness to the believer and the watching world, not to God, who already knows; ground this in 1 Peter 1:7's language of praise "at the revelation of Jesus Christ."
Application	Participants may want a formula — name the trial, name the lesson, feel better — turning application into a self-help exercise.	Redirect toward Hebrews 12:2's pattern: fix eyes on Christ's own endurance, not on decoding the trial's purpose as the primary goal; the aim is trust in God's character, not a satisfying explanation.

Discussion Question Guidance

Q1. According to James 1:2–4, what does testing actually produce, and why does James command believers to count trials as joy rather than merely endure them?

Watch for: A drifted answer treats "testing" as producing only emotional resilience, missing that James specifically names steadfastness leading to completeness.

Direction: Point back to James 1:3–4 directly: testing produces steadfastness, and steadfastness, allowed



to finish its work, produces completeness and lacking nothing — the goal is maturity, not mere survival.

Q2. How does Peter's image of gold tested by fire (1 Peter 1:7) clarify what "genuineness" of faith means, and why does that genuineness matter at "the revelation of Jesus Christ"?

Watch for: A shallow answer defines genuineness only as "faith that doesn't quit," without engaging why gold and fire is the specific image Peter chooses.

Direction: Press toward what the refining image implies — that something false or impure is being removed, not just proven durable; ask what in their own faith might need removing rather than merely tested.

Q3. Where in your life right now does a trial call for the kind of settled trust these passages describe, and what would change if you treated it as purposeful rather than merely painful?

Watch for: A vague answer names a trial without naming what specifically would change in how they respond to it.

Direction: Press for one concrete shift — in prayer, in expectation, in what they're asking God for — that reflects trusting the trial's purpose rather than only asking for its removal.



OURLIGHT BIBLE STUDY — WEEK 2 OF 6

Worship and Trust Regardless of Outcome

Leader Companion — Week 2 of “Faith Under Trial.”

Study aim: The group should see that faith under trial is expressed concretely — in worship that blesses God even in loss, and in trust that obeys regardless of whether God delivers — and should respond by examining whether their own trust in God is conditioned on a particular outcome. — Scripture Anchor: Daniel 3:17–18 (ESV)

Leader Notes

Moment	Watch For	Direction
Opening	The group may reduce the fiery furnace story to a moral lesson about bravery rather than a theological statement about the ground of obedience.	Frame the opening around the specific wording of verses 17–18 — two clauses, both true — rather than the narrative's dramatic ending, so the discussion stays on the theology, not just the story.
Doctrine	Participants may conclude that "but if not" means resigned pessimism or low expectation of God's power.	Clarify the men affirm God's ability first and fully — "our God whom we serve is able to deliver" — the "but if not" is not doubt, it is obedience that does not make deliverance a condition of loyalty.
Application	Someone may ask what to do when they can't honestly say "but if not" yet, leaving them stuck rather than moving forward.	Point to Job and Habakkuk (Day 6) as models of naming loss honestly first — worship in these texts does not require suppressing grief, only refusing to let grief displace worship.

Discussion Question Guidance

Q1. In Daniel 3:17–18, what two things do Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego both affirm, and why does the text need both held together rather than just one?

Watch for: A drifted answer names only the confidence ("God is able") and misses the second clause, or names only submission and misses the first — flattening the tension the text holds deliberately.

Direction: Point to both verses together: verse 17 affirms God's ability and willingness to deliver; verse 18 affirms obedience even if He does not — the text's force is in holding both without resolving the tension in advance.



Q2. How do Job's and Habakkuk's responses (Day 6) sharpen what it means to trust God regardless of outcome — what do they add that Daniel 3 alone does not show?

Watch for: A shallow answer just restates that Job and Habakkuk also trusted God, without naming what's different about their situation (loss already happened, not threatened).

Direction: Press toward the distinction: Daniel 3 is faith facing a future threat; Job and Habakkuk are faith responding after loss has already landed — ask which one more closely matches the participant's own situation.

Q3. What would it look like this week to worship or obey God in a specific circumstance without first knowing how it resolves?

Watch for: A vague answer names "trusting God more" without naming a specific circumstance or a specific act of obedience or worship.

Direction: Press for a name — a person, decision, or fear — and one concrete action that would constitute worship or obedience this week regardless of how the situation resolves.



OURLIGHT BIBLE STUDY — WEEK 3 OF 6

Lament and Grace Sufficient in Weakness

Leader Companion — Week 3 of “Faith Under Trial.”

Study aim: The group should understand that biblical faith does not suppress honest lament but brings it to God, and that God's strength is specifically revealed through weakness rather than despite it, and should respond by bringing their own unspoken complaint honestly before God rather than performing strength they do not have. — Scripture Anchor: 2 Corinthians 12:9 (ESV)

Leader Notes

Moment	Watch For	Direction
Opening	Participants may be unfamiliar with lament as a legitimate biblical category and assume “How long, O Lord” sounds like doubt that shouldn’t be voiced to God.	Point out that roughly a third of the Psalms are laments, and Psalm 13 itself moves from complaint to trust within six verses — lament is a Scripture-sanctioned form of faith speaking to God, not around Him.
Doctrine	The group may hear “2 Corinthians 12:9” as a general promise that God’s grace makes any hardship feel fine, flattening it into a comfort slogan.	Anchor the discussion in the specific context — Paul asked three times for removal and was refused; “sufficient” means adequate to sustain him through the unremoved thorn, not a promise the thorn will feel good.
Application	Someone may treat “boasting in weakness” (12:9–10) as false humility, boasting about weakness to seem spiritual.	Clarify Paul’s boasting is not about the weakness itself but about what it makes visible — Christ’s power resting on him — the aim is that Christ be seen, not that weakness be celebrated for its own sake.

Discussion Question Guidance

Q1. In 2 Corinthians 12:7–9, why was the thorn given to Paul, and what does the Lord’s answer in verse 9 tell us about how God typically relates to unanswered prayer for relief?

Watch for: A drifted answer treats the thorn as random suffering with no stated purpose, missing that the text ties it to keeping Paul from conceit over his revelations (12:7).

Direction: Point back to 12:7’s stated reason (to keep him from becoming conceited) and to the Lord’s direct answer in 12:9 — not removal, but sufficient grace and power perfected in weakness.



Q2. How do the psalms of lament in Day 9 change how we should think about bringing complaints to God — is honest lament in tension with faith, or an expression of it?

Watch for: A shallow answer says lament is "okay" in general terms without engaging why the psalmist's honesty coexists with trust rather than replacing it.

Direction: Press toward the specific movement within Psalm 13 — the cry doesn't get resolved by a recorded answer, yet it still ends in "I will sing to the Lord"; ask what allows that shift.

Q3. What is one place of weakness in your life where you have been asking God to remove the difficulty rather than asking Him to be sufficient in it?

Watch for: A vague answer names "weakness in general" without identifying a specific unanswered prayer or ongoing limitation.

Direction: Press for a specific, nameable thorn — not a category of struggle — and ask what asking God for sufficiency, rather than removal, would look like this week.



OUR LIGHT BIBLE STUDY — WEEK 4 OF 6

Perseverance Grounded in God's Sovereignty

Leader Companion — Week 4 of “Faith Under Trial.”

Study aim: The group should understand that Christian perseverance is not sheer willpower but confidence grounded in God's sovereign purpose and promised reward, and should respond by examining whether their endurance is currently anchored in that confidence or in their own resolve. — Scripture Anchor: Romans 8:28 (ESV)

Leader Notes

Moment	Watch For	Direction
Opening	The group may treat Romans 8:28 as a promise that everything will feel good or resolve favorably, setting up disappointment when it doesn't.	Clarify from 8:29 that "good" is defined as conformity to Christ's image, not favorable circumstances — this reframes the promise before it can be misapplied.
Doctrine	Someone may ask whether "those who love God" and "those who are called" make the promise conditional on human performance.	Point to the unbroken chain in 8:29–30 (foreknew, predestined, called, justified, glorified) — the promise's security rests on God's initiating action, not the believer's consistency.
Application	Participants may feel Hebrews 6:11's call to "full assurance of hope until the end" sets an unreachable bar of unwavering confidence.	Point to Hebrews 11's examples as ordinary people, not flawless ones — assurance is a settled direction of trust, not the absence of every doubt.

Discussion Question Guidance

Q1. According to Romans 8:28–30, what specifically is the "good" God is working, and how does that definition change how we read "all things work together for good"?

Watch for: A drifted answer treats "good" as circumstantial relief or a favorable outcome, missing verse 29's explicit definition.

Direction: Point directly to 8:29 — the stated "good" is being conformed to the image of God's Son; every other good this promise implies flows from and serves that purpose.



Q2. How does Hebrews 11:1's definition of faith — "the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen" — relate to the confidence Hebrews 10:35 says not to throw away?

Watch for: A shallow answer treats faith and confidence as two separate ideas rather than seeing Hebrews 11:1 as defining the very confidence Hebrews 10:35 commands not to throw away.

Direction: Press toward the connection across the chapter break — Hebrews was originally one continuous argument; ask what it would mean to call faith itself a form of confidence rather than a feeling.

Q3. Where has a long trial tempted you to throw away confidence rather than endure toward the promise, and what would renewed confidence look like this week?

Watch for: A vague answer says "I've struggled to trust God" without naming a specific trial or a specific way confidence eroded.

Direction: Press for the actual trial and the actual moment confidence shifted — toward doubting God's goodness, His timing, or His purpose specifically — so the renewed confidence named is equally specific.



OURLIGHT BIBLE STUDY — WEEK 5 OF 6

Refuge from Fear

Leader Companion — Week 5 of “Faith Under Trial.”

Study aim: The group should understand that God's presence — not the absence of danger — is the ground Scripture gives for courage and refuge, and should respond by identifying whether their fear is currently being brought to God in persistent prayer or managed alone. — Scripture Anchor: Psalm 46:1–3 (ESV)

Leader Notes

Moment	Watch For	Direction
Opening	The group may hear "do not fear" as a command to feel no fear at all, producing guilt over normal fear responses.	Point out that these commands are addressed to real danger — furnace, storm, crisis, siege — the command is to not let fear have the final word, not to feel nothing.
Doctrine	Participants may treat "refuge" as a metaphor for a feeling of peace rather than a claim about who God actually is in the crisis.	Ground the discussion in Psalm 46:1's actual grammar — God "is" our refuge and strength, a present-tense identity claim, not merely a description of an emotional effect He produces.
Application	Someone may say persistent prayer (Luke 18:1) feels like nagging God or doubting His hearing the first time.	Clarify Luke 18:1's parable is about not losing heart, not about God's reluctance — persistence in prayer is commended as endurance of faith, not as overcoming God's unwillingness.

Discussion Question Guidance

Q1. In Psalm 46:1–3, what does the psalmist say God is, not merely what God does, and why does that distinction matter for facing crisis?

Watch for: A drifted answer lists things God does (helps, saves, protects) without naming that the text first says what God is — refuge and strength — before describing His action.

Direction: Point back to the text's structure: verse 1 states identity before verses 2–3 describe the resulting fearlessness — the confidence flows from who God is, not first from a promised action.



Q2. How does Isaiah 43:1–3's "I am with you" language, placed by Matthew in Jesus' own mouth (Matthew 14:27), change how we should read God's presence as a Christian promise, not just an Old Testament one?

Watch for: A shallow answer notes the verbal echo without engaging why it matters that Jesus applies divine self-identification language to Himself.

Direction: Press toward the christological weight — Jesus is not merely comforting the disciples with a borrowed Old Testament promise, He is claiming the identity behind it; ask what that implies about praying to Him directly in fear.

Q3. What is one specific fear you have been holding onto rather than bringing persistently to God, and what would praying it — rather than managing it — look like this week?

Watch for: A vague answer names "anxiety in general" without a specific fear or a specific act of prayer.

Direction: Press for the actual fear by name and a specific time this week it will be prayed rather than only felt or managed.



OURLIGHT BIBLE STUDY — WEEK 6 OF 6

Enduring to the End

Leader Companion — Week 6 of “Faith Under Trial.”

Study aim: The group should understand that the hope, comfort, and patience traced across this study are Spirit-given realities meant to sustain believers to a definite end — Christ's return and the reward of the faithful — and should respond by asking what enduring faithfully, rather than merely surviving, looks like in their present trial. — Scripture Anchor: Revelation 2:10b (ESV)

Leader Notes

Moment	Watch For	Direction
Opening	The group may hear "crown of life" as a reward reserved for extraordinary Christians rather than a promise to ordinary faithful believers.	Point out Smyrna was a small, poor, persecuted congregation, not a spiritual elite — the promise is addressed to ordinary believers facing real, specific hardship, not an exceptional class.
Doctrine	Someone may ask whether "enduring to the end" makes salvation dependent on the believer's performance rather than God's grace.	Clarify that the endurance described is evidence of genuine faith, not its cause — the whole study's arc has shown hope and patience as Spirit-given, not self-generated proof offered to earn favor.
Application	Participants may leave this closing week wanting a tidy resolution to trials raised earlier in the study that remain open.	Name directly that not every trial discussed across six weeks will be resolved by this session — the study's aim was never resolution but faithful endurance toward Christ's return, which is itself the promised resolution.

Discussion Question Guidance

Q1. In Revelation 2:10, what does Christ promise, to whom, and under what specific circumstance — how does the promise's context change how it should be read?

Watch for: A drifted answer treats the promise as a general reward for good behavior, missing that it is spoken specifically to a persecuted church facing imprisonment and named tribulation.



Direction: Point to the verse's own structure: the command not to fear, the naming of specific coming suffering ("ten days"), and only then the promise — the crown answers real, named suffering, not generic faithfulness.

Q2. How does Romans 15:13's description of hope as something the Holy Spirit produces correct a view of hope as simply choosing to think positively?

Watch for: A shallow answer agrees hope is "from God" in a general sense without engaging what it means practically that hope is asked for and received, not summoned by willpower.

Direction: Press toward Romans 15:13's actual verbs — it is a prayer ("may the God of hope fill you"), not a command to try harder; ask what asking for hope, specifically, would look like this week.

Q3. Looking back across this study, where do you most need to ask the Spirit for hope and patience rather than trying to endure in your own strength?

Watch for: A vague answer says "I need more faith" without pointing back to a specific trial named earlier in the study or a specific way self-reliance has replaced dependence on the Spirit.

Direction: Press participants to name one specific trial from the six weeks and one specific way they've been enduring it in their own strength rather than asking the Spirit for hope and patience.

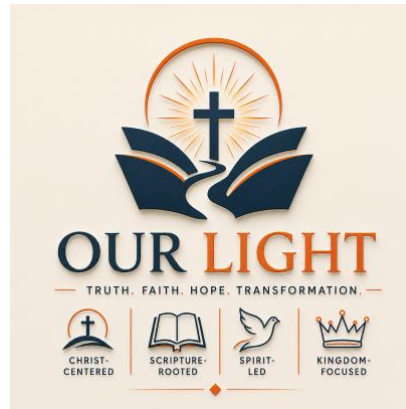


OUR LIGHT MINISTRIES

TRUTH · FAITH · HOPE · TRANSFORMATION

BIBLE STUDY
LEADER COMPANION

CLOSING



© 2026 OurLight Ministries

All rights reserved. Free to share non-commercially with attribution.

Scripture quotations from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®),

Copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used with permission. All rights reserved.