

**SHOULD HAPPENS**  
**WEEK 4 DISCUSSION GUIDE**  
**"WE SHOULD ON GOD"**

**READ**

This week we concluded our "Should Happens" series based on the book written by Todd Clark. We talked about how we place should expectations on God that can affect our relationship with and faith in him.

All of us think we know how God should act. Sometimes we think God should do certain things because that is just what we think a good God should do. God should heal children from cancer, save families from natural disasters, not let innocent people die in war. Sometimes we make agreements with God and we think if we uphold our end then God should uphold his.

We have all had times where God did not act like we thought he should. This may have caused us to get angry, bitter or even walk away. From God, church, faith, all of it. God not acting the way people think he should is nothing new.

**Psalm 10:1**

*Why, Lord, do you stand far off? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?*

**Psalm 13:1**

*How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?*

**Psalm 22:1-2**

*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from my cries of anguish? My God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer...*

We have all been there, wondering why God feels distant or why he did not meet our should expectations. We may feel at times that God does not care, but nothing could be farther from the truth. God does care deeply. But he is not always going to act like we think he should. That doesn't make him bad, weak, or not loving. It makes him God.

To help us shift our thinking about putting should expectations on God, we took a look at the story of Joseph. He found himself in several situations where most of us would have put shoulds on God, but he didn't. Joseph was one of twelve sons born to a man named Jacob. God changed Jacob's name to Israel, and his sons would become the twelve tribes of Israel.

**Genesis 37:3-4**

*Now Israel loved Joseph more than any of his other sons, because he had been born to him in his old age; and he made an ornate robe for him. When his brothers saw that their father loved him more than any of them, they hated him and could not speak a kind word to him.*

Israel loved Joseph and put all his hopes and dreams on him. Joseph's brothers hated him and wanted him to go away. They beat him up, threw him in a pit, and eventually sold him into slavery, then told his dad he died. Joseph wasn't perfect, but he did nothing to deserve this, it could have made him angry and bitter but it didn't.

Joseph ended up in Egypt working for a powerful man named Potiphar where he worked hard and became head of the house. Potiphar's wife liked him and tried to seduce him. Joseph refused her, here is why, ... *"How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?"* (Genesis 39:9). His trust and commitment to God kept him from sleeping with her.

You would think God would reward him for that, but it doesn't work that way. Potiphar's wife ripped off his clothes trying to get him to sleep with her, and Joseph ran away naked. She accused Joseph of trying to rape her, and he was thrown in jail.

### **Genesis 39:20-21**

*...But while Joseph was there in the prison, the Lord was with him; he showed him kindness and granted him favor...*

Surprisingly Joseph still did not get bitter or angry. He kept working hard and earned the respect of all the guards. Joseph had a gift for interpreting dreams, and he interpreted a couple of guys dreams, who were servants directly to Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. One of the servants was released and Joseph said, hey remember me when you get out and put in a good word for me. He said ok, but... *"The chief cupbearer, however, did not remember Joseph; he forgot him"* (Genesis 40:23).

Joseph still did not turn his back on God, instead he decided to trust what God could do rather than focusing on what he thought God should do. He had hope that even in this God could do something great and ultimately, he did. Two years later Pharaoh has a dream and one of his servants says, I know a guy who can help. Joseph is brought before Pharaoh, interprets his dream and Pharaoh puts him in charge of all of Egypt. He is then in a position where he is able to prepare for and navigate through a famine saving countless lives, including his family.

If he had given up at any point he would have missed the great thing God did through his life. Maybe you feel like giving up, but if you do you will give up what God has for your future. God has plans for you. If you want to have a full life with vibrant, life-giving faith choose to trust what God could do rather than focusing on what you think he should do. Move from a should life to a good life.

### **DISCUSS**

What are some should expectations that people tend to place on God?

Think about a season in your life when you placed should expectations on God and he did not act like you thought he should. What did this look like and how did you respond?

Reflecting on God's faithfulness can help us continue to trust God in the midst of difficult circumstances. Share about a time when you felt God's faithfulness in your life.

Joseph was faced with many difficulties and he did not get bitter and turn his back on God, instead he continued to trust and follow God. Think about someone in your life where you have seen continued trust and faithfulness in the midst of difficult circumstances. What stands out about this person and their relationship with God?

What has had the greatest impact on you throughout this series? Have you let go of any "shoulds"? If so what impact has this had on you and your relationships?

Brainstorm with your group ways that you can put into practice what you have learned through the "Should Happens" series.

#### **PRAY FOR YOUR GROUP**

Pray that God would search our hearts and help us to let go and surrender the should expectations we have been placing on ourselves, others, and God.

#### **PRAY FOR FCC**

Pray that we would choose to trust in what God could do rather than focus on what we think he should do.

#### **PRAY FOR OUR GLOBAL PARTNERS**

Please pray for India and our ministry partners. Through education, training, and love, they are helping to break the chains of poverty. The government of India is making it difficult for those who are not of Hindu faith; however, God is faithful and continues to supply our partners with the ability to open and operate schools for children, adult training centers for vocations, a nursing school, and a college for higher learning. Please pray for their continued protection and ability to connect and establish fruitful facilities in India to promote learning, potential for a better future, and dignity to all people.