



# DISCUSSION GUIDE

September 28/October 1, 2017

**Overwhelmed by Discouragement**  
**BIG IDEA:** When we feel overwhelmed with discouragement, we can overcome with Jesus.

## GROUPS VISION

We believe life transformation happens when we engage with other people, with Jesus as our focus, and take next steps together. A next step is where we Ask, Listen, and Respond to take any action that advances our journey with Jesus.

**My Story.**

An encounter with Jesus leaves a story to tell. Share yours at [valleycreek.org/MyStory](http://valleycreek.org/MyStory).

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## KEY VERSE

**"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."**

**John 16:33**

## POTENTIAL NEXT STEP

Find a quiet space and sit alone with God. Be aware that He is with you. He holds you together and He will never leave you. Listen for God's whisper of peace.

## MAIN POINTS & SCRIPTURES

Being overwhelmed is an epidemic in our society. Often, we are overwhelmed by stuff, politics, calendars, people, and activities. Jesus overcame everything so we don't have to be overwhelmed by anything. (**John 16:33**) At times, discouragement can feel overwhelming. Discouragement is the gap between expectations and reality. Some of the worst decisions we make are when we try to find a quick comfort for deep pain. After we experience a 'mountain top' we often find ourselves in a valley and discouragement sets in. (**1Kings 19:1-4**) Here are some practical ways to overcome discouragement:

1. **Focus on your health.** Sometimes the most spiritual thing you can do is "have a snack and take a nap". God made us complete, mind, body and soul, however, we tend to forget how interdependently we function. (**Mark 12:30**)
2. **Be aware of God's presence.** Many times we want God to speak to us in the miraculous so we don't miss His voice. However, God wants to speak to us in a whisper so we don't miss Him. (**1Kings 19:11, Joshua 1:9**) The presence of God is the antidote for discouragement.
3. **Talk to God honestly.** When you talk to God, don't be religious, be real. (**1Kings 19:10, Psalm 42:5**) Talking with God honestly can change your heart. Honest conversation with God changes our focus from ourselves and our situation to Him.
4. **Find a friend.** Sometimes we feel isolated, like we're the only one going through a situation. We are not alone. We start friendships through commonality, deepen friendships through sharing, and solidify friendships through talking, learning and becoming like Jesus together. (**1Kings 19:14, 1Kings 19:18-19**)
5. **Don't give up.** Faithfulness is undervalued in our world but faithfulness is rewarded in the Kingdom of Heaven. (**1Kings 19:15, Galatians 6:9**) The valley isn't our home. Remember not to make major decisions in the valley because our vision and judgment is clouded. God is with us in the valley. (**Psalm 23**)

When we focus on these five areas we will take our eyes off our circumstances and put them on Jesus. We don't have to be overwhelmed by anything, because Jesus has overcome everything.

## DISCUSSION

1. Where are some places you go to find comfort and courage when you're feeling discouraged? (See intro)
2. Talking with God honestly can change your heart. How does talking honestly with God change our perspective? (See point #3)
3. Share a time when God sustained you through a valley and you knew He was with you. Or, perhaps you're in a valley struggling to know God is with you. Your group can encourage you in this season. (See point #5)
4. **What is the Holy Spirit saying to you?**
5. **What is your next step?**