# MASTERWORK.



Lessons from

YOU'LL GET THROUGH THIS by Max Lucado THE LIFE OF DAVID by Alexander MacLaren

LifeWay | Adults

#### A STEP OF FAITH

In your opinion, what does it take for a person to get to heaven and have eternal life? The Bible answers this question in one word—**FAITH.** 

#### F Is for Forgiveness

- Everyone has sinned and needs God's forgiveness: "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).
- God's forgiveness is in Jesus only: "In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace" (Ephesians 1:7).

#### ${f A}$ Is for Available

- God's forgiveness is available for all: "God loved the world in this way: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).
- God's forgiveness is available but not automatic: "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord!' will enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 7:21).

#### I Is for Impossible

• It is impossible to get to heaven on our own: "You are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift—not from works, so that no one can boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9).

#### T Is for Turn

• Turn means repent. Turn away from sin and self and turn to Jesus alone as your Savior and Lord: "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6); "If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. One believes with the heart, resulting in righteousness, and one confesses with the mouth, resulting in salvation" (Romans 10:9-10).

#### H Is for Heaven

- Here ... Eternal life begins now with Jesus: "I have come so that they may have life and have it in abundance" (John 10:10).
- Hereafter ... Heaven is a place where we will live with God forever: "If I go away and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to myself, so that where I am you may be also" (John 14:3).
- How ... How can a person have God's forgiveness, eternal life, and heaven? By trusting Jesus as your Savior and Lord. You can do this right now by praying and asking Jesus to forgive you of your sins and inviting Jesus into your heart.

Accepting Christ is just the beginning of a wonderful adventure with God! Follow Christ's command in baptism. Join a church where you can worship God and grow in your faith. Get involved in Sunday School and Bible study. Begin a daily personal worship time in which you study the Bible and pray.

# MASTERWORK®

## Lessons from YOU'LL GET THROUGH THIS

by Max Lucado

THE LIFE OF DAVID

by Alexander MacLaren

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCING	YOU'LL GET THROUGH THIS	5
SUGGESTED FOR THE WEEK OF		
JUNE 2	Session 1: You'll Get Through This	6
JUNE 9	Session 2: Down, Down, Down to Egypt	17
JUNE 16	Session 3: Alone But Not All Alone	27
JUNE 23	Session 4: Stupid Won't Fix Stupid	38
JUNE 30	Session 5: Oh, So This Is Boot Camp!	48
INTRODUCING	THE LIFE OF DAVID	61
JULY 7	Session 6: Early Days	62
JULY 14	Session 7: The Exile	76
JULY 21	Session 8: The Exile (Cont.)	89
JULY 28	Session 9: The King	102
AUGUST 4	Session 10: The King (Cont.)	116
AUGUST 11	Session 11: The Tears of the Penitent	130
AUGUST 18	Session 12: Chastisements	144
AUGUST 25	Session 13: The Songs of the Fugitive	155



#### GETTING THE MOST OUT OF MASTERWORK

Here are a few suggestions to help you get the most out of this resource:

#### **Group Members**

- 1. Read the daily assignments prior to attending the group time. Complete the personal learning activities in bold type. Record your notes and questions.
- **2.** Review your notes and questions a few moments prior to the group time as a means of preparing to be an active part of the group.
- 3. In the margins of this book, record insights gained during the group time.

#### Group Leader

- **1.** Complete step 1 above.
- 2. Identify the one main idea and goal for the lesson. The main point of the lesson and the goal are printed on the teaching plan pages at the end of each lesson. (See p. 15.) Focus on the session goal as you lead the session.
- **3.** Read and study the key Bible passages listed in the margin of the teaching plan. Supplemental Bible commentary and Bible background articles are available in the MasterWork Leader Supplement. (See below.)
- **4.** Develop a group time plan. Two options are offered in this book. One option is to follow the teaching plan at the end of each lesson. A second option is to use the discussion questions in the margins of the lessons. Some group leaders use a combination of both group time plans.
- **5.** Customize the electronic versions of the suggested teaching plans, available on the Internet at <a href="https://masterworkbylifeway.wordpress.com">https://masterworkbylifeway.wordpress.com</a>, to fit your group.
- **6.** Review and refine your teaching notes as you move toward the group time.
- **7.** Arrive early, praying for the group time.

#### MASTERWORK LEADER SUPPLEMENT

Bible commentary on key passages used in *MasterWork* lessons and related *Biblical Illustrator* articles are available for download at lifeway.com/masterwork. Look for "MasterWork Leader Supplement - Summer 2019"



# You'll Get Through This

Hope and Help for Your Turbulent Times

Life is a wonderful gift from God, and most people do all they can to hold on to the one they've been given. But let's face it. Sometimes life can take you by surprise, and not in a good way. It can slap you upside the head and drag you down into a roiling sea of desperation, anger, hurt, confusion, pain, and any number of other feelings and emotions you would rather not visit, much less make your abode. At times, the cloud covering us from our undesired circumstances can be so dark, so oppressive, so consuming we question whether we will even survive, let alone dare to hope we could ever thrive again. For some, the experience cuts so deep into the quick of life that the foundation of their faith quakes and they begin to doubt God—His goodness, His power, His care and awareness, even His very existence.

Pastor and author Max Lucado, using the experiences of Joseph in the Old Testament, offers this word of hope for such turbulent situations:

You'll get through this.

It won't be painless.

It won't be quick.

But God will use this mess for good.

Don't be foolish or naive.

But don't despair either.

With God's help, you'll get through this.





#### ABOUT THE WRITERS

#### MAX LUCADO,

popular author, speaker, and pastor, wrote You'll Get Through This.
Lucado ministers at the Oak Hills Church in San Antonio, Texas. He and his wife, Denalyn, have been married over thirty years. Lucado has now published forty trade books, the latest being Unshakable Hope: Building Our Lives on the Promises of God

LESLIE H U D S O N wrote the personal activities, interactive questions, and leader guide teaching suggestions for this study. A member of First Baptist Church, Dickson, Tennessee. Hudson lives in the perfect small town of White Bluff. Tennessee. where she drinks hot coffee and practices praying God's Word for her family, Sunday School class, and community.

### You'll Get Through This



#### DAY ONE

#### Don't Despair

She had a tremble to her, the inner tremble you could feel with just a hand on her shoulder. I saw her in a grocery store. Had not seen her in some months. I asked about her kids and husband, and when I did, her eyes watered, her chin quivered, and the story spilled out. He'd left her. After twenty years of marriage, three kids, and a dozen moves, gone. Traded her in for a younger model. She did her best to maintain her composure but couldn't. The grocery store produce section became a sanctuary of sorts. Right there between the tomatoes and the heads of lettuce, she wept. We prayed. Then I said, "You'll get through this. It won't be painless. It won't be quick. But God will use this mess for good. In the meantime don't be foolish or naive. But don't despair either. With God's help you will get through this."

Discussion	Questions
Has anvone	ever said

**Discussion Questions**When you hear the

through this, whose life

do you think of? What

you thought you might

are some situations

you've been in that

not get through?

words, You'll get

to you something along the lines of the author's words at the end of the first paragraph? Did you believe it? Explain.

1. Have you been in the author's shoes, attempting to console someone in the midst of extreme difficulty? What did you say?				

Two days later a friend called. He'd just been fired. The dismissal was his fault. He'd made stupid, inappropriate remarks at work. Crude, offensive statements. His boss kicked him out. Now he's a fifty-seven-year-old

unemployed manager in a rotten economy. He feels terrible and sounds worse. Wife angry. Kids confused. He needed assurance, so I gave it: "You'll get through this. It won't be painless. It won't be quick. But God will use this mess for good. In the meantime don't be foolish or naive. But don't despair either. With God's help you will get through this."

Then there is the teenager I met at the café where she works.

She's fresh out of high school, hoping to get into college next month. Her life, as it turns out, hasn't been easy. When she was six years old, her parents divorced. When she was fifteen, they remarried, only to divorce again a few months ago. Recently her parents told her to choose: live with Mom or live with Dad. She got misty-eyed as she described their announcement. I didn't have a chance to tell her this, but if I see her again, you can bet your sweet September I am going to look her square in the eyes and say, "You'll get through this. It won't be painless. It won't be quick. But God will use this mess for good. In the meantime don't be foolish or naive. But don't despair either. With God's help you will get through this."

Audacious of me, right? How dare I say such words? Where did I get the nerve to speak such a promise into tragedy? In a pit, actually. A deep, dark pit. So steep, the boy could not climb out. Had he been able to, his brothers would have shoved him back down. They were the ones who had thrown him in.

2. Have you ever felt like you were in a pit? Briefly describe your emotions and focus during that time.					
		_			
		_			



#### DAY TWO

#### Betrayed

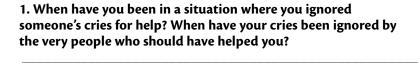
So it came to pass, when Joseph had come to his brothers, that they stripped Joseph of his tunic, the tunic of many colors that was on him. Then they took him and cast him into a pit. And the pit was empty; there was no water in it.

And they sat down to eat a meal (Gen. 37:23-25).

It was an abandoned cistern. Jagged rocks and roots extended from its sides. The seventeen-year-old boy lay at the bottom. Downy beard, spindly arms and legs. His hands were bound, ankles tied. He lay on his side, knees to chest, cramped in the small space. The sand was wet with spittle, where he had drooled. His eyes were wide with fear. His voice was hoarse from screaming. It wasn't that his brothers didn't hear him. Twenty-two years later, when a famine had tamed their swagger and guilt had dampened their pride, they would confess, "We saw the anguish of his soul when he pleaded with us, and we would not hear" (42:21).

#### **Discussion Question**

Consider the words, "would not hear" in Genesis 42:21. What are some reasons people would choose not to hear when others cry out for help?



These are the great-grandsons of Abraham. The sons of Jacob. Couriers of God's covenant to a galaxy of people. Tribes will bear their banners. The name of Jesus Christ will appear on their family tree. They are the Scriptures' equivalent of royalty. Yet on this day they were the Bronze Age version of a dysfunctional family. In the shadow of a sycamore, in earshot of Joseph's appeals, they chewed on venison and passed the wineskin. Cruel and oafish. Hearts as hard as the Canaanite desert. Lunch mattered more than their brother. They despised the boy. "They hated him and could not speak peaceably to him ... they hated him even more ... they hated him ... his brothers envied him" (37:4-5,8,11).

Here's why. Their father pampered Joseph like a prized calf. Jacob had two wives, Leah and Rachel, but one love, Rachel. When Rachel died, Jacob kept her memory alive by fawning over their first son. The brothers worked all day. Joseph played all day. They wore clothes from a second-hand store. Jacob gave Joseph a hand-stitched, multicolored cloak with embroidered sleeves. They slept in the bunkhouse. He had a queen-sized bed in his own room. While they ran the family herd, Joseph, Daddy's little darling, stayed home. Jacob treated the eleventh-born like a firstborn. The brothers spat at the sight of Joseph.

To say the family was in crisis would be like saying a grass hut might be unstable in a hurricane.

2. Fill in the blanks: I can relate to the brothers in Genesis 37 because			
I can relate to Joseph in Genesis 37 because			
	•		



#### DAY THREE

#### In the Pits

The brothers caught Joseph far from home, sixty miles away from Daddy's protection, and went nuclear on him. "They *stripped* Joseph of his tunic ... they *took* him and *cast* him into a pit" (vv. 23-24, emphasis mine). Defiant verbs. They wanted not only to kill Joseph but also hide his body. This was a murderous cover-up from the get-go. "We shall say, 'Some wild beast has devoured him" (v. 20).

Joseph didn't see this assault coming. He didn't climb out of bed that morning and think, I'd better dress in padded clothing because this is the day I get tossed into a hole. The attack caught him off guard.

So did yours. Joseph's pit came in the form of a cistern. Maybe yours came in the form of a diagnosis, a foster home, or a traumatic injury. Joseph was thrown in a hole and despised. And you? Thrown in an unemployment line and forgotten. Thrown into a divorce and abandoned, into a bed and abused. The pit. A kind of death, waterless and austere. Some people never recover. Life is reduced to one quest: get out and never be hurt again. Not simply done. Pits have no easy exits.

1. Briefly describe a time when life's attacks caught you off guard.				
	_			

Joseph's story got worse before it got better. Abandonment led to enslavement, then entrapment, and finally imprisonment. He was sucker

#### **Discussion Question**

Knowing what you know of the major players in Genesis 37 (Jacob, Joseph, the eleven brothers), who is to blame most for Joseph ending up in the cistern? Explain.

#### **Discussion Questions**

Did the brothers have a "right" to be angry at Joseph? Did they have a "right" to respond as they did? How do we stop anger from going too far? punched. Sold out. Mistreated. People made promises only to break them, offered gifts only to take them back. If hurt were a swampland, then Joseph was sentenced to a life of hard labor in the Everglades.

Yet he never gave up. Bitterness never staked its claim. Anger never metastasized into hatred. His heart never hardened; his resolve never vanished. He not only survived; he thrived. He ascended like a helium balloon. An Egyptian official promoted him to chief servant. The prison warden placed him over the inmates. And Pharaoh, the highest ruler on the planet, shoulder-tapped Joseph to serve as his prime minister. By the end of his life, Joseph was the second most powerful man of his generation. It is not hyperbole to state that he saved the world from starvation. How would that look on a résumé?

Joseph Son of Jacob
Graduate with honors from the University of Hard Knocks
Director of Global Effort to Save Humanity
Succeeded

How? How did he flourish in the midst of tragedy? We don't have to speculate. Some twenty years later the roles were reversed, Joseph as the strong one and his brothers the weak ones. They came to him in dread. They feared he would settle the score and throw them into a pit of his own making. But Joseph didn't. And in his explanation we find his inspiration.

"As for you, you meant evil against me, *but* God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive" (50:20, NASB).

Discussion Que	stion
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How has immaturity become maturity through difficulty in your own life?

2. How v Genesis	vould you characterize Joseph's response recorded in 50:20?
In what	ways does your life reflect that same character?



#### DAY FOUR

#### Holding to the Promise

#### In God's hands intended evil becomes eventual good.

Joseph tied himself to the pillar of this promise and held on for dear life. Nothing in his story glosses over the *presence* of evil. Quite the contrary. Bloodstains, tearstains are everywhere. Joseph's heart was rubbed raw against the rocks of disloyalty and miscarried justice. Yet time and time again, God redeemed the pain. The torn robe became a royal one. The pit became a palace. The broken family grew old together. The very acts intended to destroy God's servant turned out to strengthen him.

"You *meant* evil against me," Joseph told his brothers, using a Hebrew verb that traces its meaning to "weave" or "plait." "You *wove* evil," he was saying, "but God *rewove* it together for good."

. Who has woven evil in your life? How can you see—even in the mallest way—God's reweaving?					the

God, the Master Weaver. He stretches the yarn and intertwines the colors, the ragged twine with the velvet strings, the pains with the pleasures. Nothing escapes His reach. Every king, despot, weather pattern, and molecule are at His command. He passes the shuttle back and forth across the generations, and as He does, a design emerges. Satan weaves; God reweaves.

And God, the Master Builder. This is the meaning behind Joseph's words "God meant it for good in order to *bring about* ..." The Hebrew word translated here as *bring about* is a construction term. It describes a task or building project akin to the one I drive through every morning. The state of Texas is rebuilding a highway overpass near my house. Three lanes have been reduced to one, transforming a morning commute into a daily stew. The interstate project, like human history, has been in development since before time began. Cranes hover overhead daily. Workers hold signs and

#### **Discussion Question**

When have you seen God reweave a tragic event and bring good from it despite the initial tragedy?

#### You'll Get Through This

shovels, and several million of us grumble. Well, at least I do. *How long is this going to last?* 

My next-door neighbors have a different attitude toward the project. The husband and wife are highway engineers, consultants to the department of transportation. They endure the same traffic jams and detours as the rest of us but do so with a better attitude. Why? They know how these projects develop. "It will take time," they respond to my grumbles, "but it will get finished. It's doable." They've seen the plans.

By giving us stories like Joseph's, God allows us to study His plans. Such disarray! Brothers dumping brother. Entitlements. Famines and family feuds scattered about like nails and cement bags on a vacant lot. Satan's logic was sinister and simple: destroy the family of Abraham and thereby destroy his seed, Jesus Christ. All of hell, it seems, set its target on Jacob's boys.

#### **Discussion Question**

How can one's experience give a person a different perspective about difficulties and challenges?

2. How o	does the pred	eding parag	raph relate	to Ephesian	s 6:12?
How does it relate to your life today?					

But watch the Master Builder at work. He cleared debris, stabilized the structure, and bolted trusses until the chaos of Genesis 37:24 ("They ... cast him into a pit") became the triumph of Genesis 50:20 ("life for many people," MSG).

God as Master Weaver, Master Builder. He redeemed the story of Joseph. Can't He redeem your story as well?

You'll get through this. You fear you won't. We all do. We fear that the depression will never lift, the yelling will never stop, the pain will never leave. Here in the pits, surrounded by steep walls and angry brothers, we wonder, Will this gray sky ever brighten? This load ever lighten? We feel stuck, trapped, locked in. Predestined for failure. Will we ever exit this pit?

Yes! Deliverance is to the Bible what jazz music is to Mardi Gras: bold, brassy, and everywhere.

Out of the lions' den for Daniel, the prison for Peter, the whale's belly for Jonah, Goliath's shadow for David, the storm for the disciples, disease for the lepers, doubt for Thomas, the grave for Lazarus, and the shackles for Paul. God gets us through stuff. *Through* the Red Sea onto dry ground (Ex. 14:22), *through* the wilderness (Deut. 29:5), *through* the valley of the shadow of death (Ps. 23:4), and *through* the deep sea (Ps. 77:19). *Through* is a favorite word of God's:

"When you pass *through* the waters, I will be with you; And *through* the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk *through* the fire, you shall not be burned, Nor shall the flame scorch you" (Isa. 43:2, emphasis mine).



#### DAY FIVE

#### It Won't Be Painless

It won't be painless. Have you wept your final tear or received your last round of chemotherapy? Not necessarily. Will your unhappy marriage become happy in a heartbeat? Not likely. Are you exempt from any trip to the cemetery? Does God guarantee the absence of struggle and the abundance of strength? Not in this life. But He does pledge to reweave your pain for a higher purpose.

It won't be quick. Joseph was seventeen years old when his brothers abandoned him. He was at least thirty-seven when he saw them again. Another couple of years passed before he saw his father. Sometimes God takes His time: One hundred twenty years to prepare Noah for the flood, eighty years to prepare Moses for his work. God called young David to be king but returned him to the sheep pasture. He called Paul to be an apostle and then isolated him in Arabia for perhaps three years. Jesus was on the earth for three decades before He built anything more than a kitchen table. How long

will God take with you? He may take His time. His history is redeemed not in minutes but in lifetimes.

waiting. What might the summary of your life's waiting look l	

But God will use your mess for good. We see a perfect mess; God sees a perfect chance to train, test, and teach the future prime minister. We see a prison; God sees a kiln. We see famine; God sees the relocation of His chosen lineage. We call it Egypt; God calls it protective custody, where the sons of Jacob can escape barbaric Canaan and multiply abundantly in peace. We see Satan's tricks and ploys. God sees Satan tripped and foiled.

Let me be clear. You are a version of Joseph in your generation. You represent a challenge to Satan's plan. You carry something of God within you, something noble and holy, something the world needs—wisdom, kindness, mercy, skill. If Satan can neutralize you, he can mute your influence.

The story of Joseph is in the Bible for this reason: to teach you to trust God to trump evil. What Satan intends for evil, God, the Master Weaver and Master Builder, redeems for good.

about G	2. You know God is the master re-weaver. What else do you know about God? Write a few statements that start with the words, "I know" concerning your own trying situation(s).					

Joseph would be the first to tell you that life in the pit stinks. Yet for all its rottenness doesn't the pit do this much? It forces you to look upward. Someone from *up there* must come *down here* and give you a hand. God did for Joseph. At the right time, in the right way, He will do the same for you.

#### Discussion Question

**Discussion Question** 

How is Joseph's young life in Genesis 37

reflective of

Romans 8:28?

When we realize we're in a pit, what steps can we take to "look upward"?

1. Joseph was probably seventeen when he was sold to the Midianites (Gen. 37:2). He was twenty-eight when the butler, who promised to help him get out of prison, was released (40:21-23). Two years later, when Joseph was thirty, Joseph interpreted Pharaoh's dreams (41:1, 46). And Joseph was about thirty-nine when his brothers came to Egypt the second time (45:1-6), in the second year of the famine following the seven years of plenty.

#### LEADER GUIDE



#### **Before the Session**

- 1. Obtain an oversized index cards, one per learner for an ongoing activity throughout the five sessions of this series. (Steps 1 and 7)
- 2. Enlist a participant to summarize Genesis 37:1-25. (Step 3)
- **3.** Enlist a class participant talented with yarn crafts (crocheting, knitting, etc.) to bring an unfinished and a finished project and to be prepared to share information about it. (Step 5)

#### **During the Session**

- 1. As learners arrive, hand each an oversized index card. Instruct them to divide one side in half by drawing a line. Say: As we start a new study, consider people you know who are going through a difficult situation. Write their initials and a two- or three-word description of their situation in one section of the your card. After a few moments, instruct adults to write in the other section the hardest thing they are facing or know they will face in the coming year. Explain that these difficult situations will be the background and prayer list for the next five weeks. Encourage them to keep the cards in their Bibles for the duration.
- 2. Summarize the three people's situations described in Day One (pp. 6-7). Point out that in the first instance, the woman had no control over her situation; in the second, the man brought the trouble upon himself; and in the third, the girl was unsure of what to do. Say: These situations likely reflect our own times of difficulty. The author counseled each with the same words. Read that quote (Day One, p. 6, end of first paragraph). Ask: Which of these statements is the hardest to believe and do? Which goes against your natural tendencies in the face of stress?
- 3. Call on the enlisted learner to summarize Genesis 37:1-25. When finished, list as a group reasons for the extreme action taken by the brothers in verses 23-25. Use the paragraph beginning, "Here's why" (Day Two, p. 8) for additional insight. Say: Let's step back a minute and consider reasons these men should never have allowed their family to

## The main point of this lesson is: God desires and is able to work

through even the direst circumstances.

Focus on this goal: To help adults hold on to God's presence and plan for their lives, even in life's worst circumstances

#### **Key Bible Passage:**

Genesis 37:1-25a (ends with "eat a meal")

- fall into such disarray. Read the Day Two paragraph (p. 8) beginning, "These are the great-grandsons ..." to get the conversation started.
- 4. Ask Why would Joseph consider the events of verses 23-25 unfair? Did Joseph's brothers consider the way their father treated Joseph unfair? Have you ever said or heard "Well, life isn't fair!" to a complaint about something not being fair? As a group, consider things that have happened in the past week that were not "fair." Say: In Joseph's situation, and in any seemingly unfair situation, we must choose to focus not on the unfairness but on what we must do in response. Invite a volunteer to peek ahead in the story and read Genesis 50:20. Say: We're going to remember this verse from the end of Joseph's story throughout our study and consider what Joseph did to come out of his unfair situations with this attitude.
- 5. Invite a volunteer to read the first Day Four paragraph (p. 11). Observe that neither God nor the Bible ever minimizes evil, sin, and the pain they cause. Share some of your favorite (or invite learners to) Scriptures about God's peace, stronghold, or presence (such as John 16:33 or Ps. 46:1-3). Encourage learners with the truth that we have these promises because we need them. Invite the pre-enlisted volunteer to show his or her in-process and finished products, describing the knots, mistakes, or problems regularly encountered. Say: Just as (Name) takes the raw product and the messes along the way and makes it into something wonderful, we can trust that God is doing the same thing in our lives.
- 6. Read the two Day Five section headings (p. 13): "It won't be painless." "It won't be quick." Lead the group to discuss the wisdom of embracing these two statement. Emphasize that if we knew how long our trials would last or how painful our struggles would be, we might give up or lose hope. Read the rest of the Day Five paragraph (p. 13) that begins with the sentence "It won't be quick." Challenge learners to consider their own periods of waiting and to draw comfort from the third Day Five heading (p. 14): "But God will use your mess for good."
- 7. Direct attention back to the cards from Step One. Say: This is going to be our prayer list for the upcoming weeks. We're going to pray for these people and situations. We're going to pray they believe the truth of what we're learning, and that God will give us the opportunity to speak truth in each life. Encourage learners this week to write on the back of the card the author's quote found at the end of the first Day One paragraph (p. 6).

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