

# Flourishing in the Valley Season

## As I WALK Through the Valley

We think of mountain top experiences as those great, life-changing events that makes us feel good, and impact us in a mighty way. But then the valleys are those less than good feeling times, where life is drudgery, and it feels like it will never end. We all love the mountain top experiences—times of blessing and sunshine, but where does the fruit grow? You won't find many orchards on mountain tops. The view is nice up there, but the fruit grows in the valley! And it's those trials, struggles, the valleys of life that God uses to grow us into who He created us to be.

***When they walk through the Valley of Weeping, it will become a place of refreshing springs. The autumn rains will clothe it with blessings.*** Psalm 84:6 NLT

For many, the valleys can be a place of bitterness, but this verse talks about a place of refreshing. Using the word "WALK" we are going to discover how we can make the figurative valleys we experience, times of blessing and growth.

**W—What does God want me to learn from this valley?** So often, what happens when we go through a valley experience, we start asking, "Why me." The very first word of the verse says "when." We will all walk through the valley of weeping. Seasons of being in the valley are inevitable, and everyone experiences them. So instead of crying out to God and asking, "*why me*" turn the question around and say, "*Why not me?*" and then ask God "*What do You want me to learn from this? What are You trying to teach me, God?*"

**A—Accept the valley with the proper attitude.** A bad attitude isn't going to take the valley away or make the journey through it any easier. We can choose our attitude—how we respond to the valley. Are we going to worship or complain, praise God or gripe, be discouraged or focused on what God is going to do.

**L—Look to the Lord for His strength.** In order to get through the valley, we have to have a proper focus. Where am I going to look? Am I going to focus on God or on the valley? Am I going to focus on Christ or on my circumstances? Am I going to focus on my situation or on my Savior? Am I going to focus on my problem or on God's power. Psalm 23:4 tells us that we don't go through the valleys alone, so let's focus on Him and lean on Him through the valley.

**K—Keep moving forward; this too shall pass.** Notice the verse says "*through*." There is an end in sight. We weren't intended to stay forever in the valley. It is not our stopping place. We don't need to camp there, dwell there, or take extended rest stops there. We need to keep moving forward, one step at a time, walking with God, and be assured that this valley won't be the end of you.



## Inside this issue

Conversation Starters.....	2
Additional Resources.....	2
Prayer Ideas.....	2
Monthly Bible Reading .....	3
Ideas from the Territory .....	3
Flourishing While in the Valley .....	4
Fun Ideas for February .....	4

## Territorial Women's Ministries Department

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## Flourishing in Relationships: Conversation Starters

Spend some time with friends this month, talking and sharing in fellowship, using questions to get your conversations rolling.

- ◆ Do you usually celebrate Valentine's Day? If so, how? If no, why not?
- ◆ Chocolate goes with Valentine's Day. What is your favorite kind of chocolate?
- ◆ What does the color red make you think of?
- ◆ Something I believe about love is \_\_\_\_\_.
- ◆ What is the nicest thing anyone has ever done for you?
- ◆ Do you remember any Valentine's Day gifts or cards that you received in the past?
- ◆ What is your salvation story? How did you become a Christian?
- ◆ The Bible is God's love letter to us. What is your favorite verse that communicates His love for you?
- ◆ How can a woman grow in her love for the Lord?
- ◆ How do you express your love to God?

*"Mountaintops are for views and inspiration, but fruit is grown in the valleys."*  
Billy Graham

### Additional Resources

Check out our website for more resources to help you flourish in the valley season:

<https://usw-womensministries.org/>

Bible Study: *Flourishing in the Valley* on Romans 5:1-5

Devotional: *Flourishing in the Valley*

Craft Idea: *Easy Macrame Rainbow*

Flourishing Story: Liane Vierra who attends the Hawaii Kroc Center shares her beautiful story of *Flourishing in the Valley Season*

## Flourishing in Prayer: Prayer Ideas

Here are some creative ideas to incorporate into your daily prayer time this month.

**Broken Hearts.** Psalm 34:18 says, *The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.* Around Valentine's Day we think about love, and often we forget those who might find Valentine's Day challenging. There are probably people you know that have broken hearts this February. Perhaps they are facing the loss of a loved one or job, facing a scary diagnosis, or simply struggling. Send those you pray for a Valentine.

**Candy Hearts.** Get a box of the conversation hearts, and each day take a heart and incorporate that word or phrase into your prayer time.

**God, I Love You.** "How do I love thee, let me count the ways." Elizabeth Barrett Browning penned this famous poem. Spend the month of February counting the ways you love God. Each day this month, tell God one reason why you love Him. Perhaps write each reason you love God on a paper heart and display it for the month. At the end of the month, you can see all the ways you have counted that you love God.

**Valentine Prayers.** Spend February praying for loved ones. Paul wrote in Philippians 1:3, *"I thank my God every time I remember you."* Every day this month, pray for a different person. Send each person a Valentine and include your specific prayer for that person.



*What lessons can you learn from the valleys in the Bible?*

## Flourishing in the Word

For the month of February, let's read about valleys in the Bible.

Feb 1	Genesis 14:1-24	Feb 15	Psalms 23:1-6
Feb 2	Genesis 26:1-33	Feb 16	Psalms 60:1-12
Feb 3	Numbers 13:1-33	Feb 17	Psalms 65:1-13
Feb 4	Numbers 21:1-20	Feb 18	Psalms 84:1-12
Feb 5	Joshua 7:1-26	Feb 19	Psalms 104:1-10
Feb 6	Joshua 10:1-15	Feb 20	Isaiah 41:8-20
Feb 7	Judges 6:1-40	Feb 21	Jeremiah 7:30-8:3
Feb 8	Judges 7:1-25	Feb 22	Ezekiel 37:1-14
Feb 9	1 Samuel 17:1-24	Feb 23	Hosea 1:1-2:1
Feb 10	1 Samuel 17:25-50	Feb 24	Hosea 2:2-23
Feb 11	2 Samuel 5:1-25	Feb 25	Joel 3:1-21
Feb 12	2 Kings 3:1-27	Feb 26	Zechariah 14:1-21
Feb 13	2 Kings 23:1-30	Feb 27	Luke 3:1-20
Feb 14	2 Chronicles 20:1-30	Feb 28	John 18:1-14

***"We are not made for the mountains, for sunrises, or for the other beautiful attractions in life—those are simply intended to be moments of inspiration. We are made for the valley and the ordinary things of life and that is where we have to prove our stamina and strength." Oswald Chambers***

### Flourishing Ideas from the Territory

**Bellingham, WA** ladies were treated to the male Corps Officer cooking some food for them. He taught them how to make chicken curry.

**Coeur d'Alene Kroc, ID** and **Mesa, AZ** are doing a book study on *"Forgiving What You Cannot Forget"* by Lysa Terkeurst.

**Kenai, AK** stay connected through a Daily Bible Devotional App. Everyone comments and encourages each other to read the day's devotion, and then once a week they get together and discuss what they have read.

**Klawock, AK** is working on a fun event—"Our Presidents' Wives" Everyone chooses a president's wife, and they are to dress up as the women, share some biographical information about her, and will bring a small refreshment related to the presidents' wife.

**Santa Cruz, CA & Tulare, CA** both celebrated Latin Independence Day.

**Santa Rosa, CA** women committed to a book study, *Awaken*, from Priscilla Shirer for 90 days. It caused them to all engage daily in the word as well as do short journaling. The Corps Officer shared, "We made the commitment at the beginning and it was a huge blessing. We grew closer to God and one another."

**Washougal, WA** did a scavenger hunt around the church property with scripture based clues and also had a campfire worship night.

## Tips for Flourishing While in the Valley

Psalm 23, probably the most familiar psalm, has some great reminders for us of how to flourish while walking through the seasons that feel like a valley.

1. **Lean on the Shepherd's Character** (Psalm 23:1-3). He is the Good Shepherd who provides, leads, guides, and refreshes. You lack nothing.
2. **Look for the Shepherd's Constant Presence** (Psalm 23:4). You aren't travelling through this valley alone, the Good Shepherd is leading the way, but is also walking right beside you.
3. **Listen to the Shepherd's Comforting Words** (Psalm 23:5-6). Jesus describes Himself as the Good Shepherd in John 10, and says that His sheep know His voice. He is speaking, words of goodness and love, and we are promised that His goodness and love follow or pursue us all the days of our lives.



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***“Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and staff, they comfort me.” Psalm 23:4***

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## Flourishing Fun in February



1. Bake your family their favorite dessert.
2. Celebrate Black History Month.
3. Create some DIY Valentine Day décor.
4. Feed the birds in honor of it being National Bird Feeding Month.
5. Get a head start on spring cleaning.
6. Go on a nature walk.
7. Make homemade soup in honor of National Homemade Soup Day on February 4th.
8. Make a pizza to celebrate National Pizza Day on February 9th.
9. Host a Super Bowl Party on February 12th.
10. Do something kind for someone in honor of National Random Acts of Kindness Day on February 17th.