

## What Did You Expect?

### **Opening:**

Exodus 4:29-31

### **Don't Be Surprised When:**

Exodus 5:1-23 John 16:33 Romans 5:1, 3-5 & 12:18 James 1:2-4 2 Corinthians 12:9-11 Psalm 73

→ The world doesn't **understand us**.

→ We **face trouble**.

Trouble is an opportunity for:

- ✓ **Peace**
- ✓ **Growth**
- ✓ My **weakness** and Jesus' **strength**

→ We feel like **giving up**.

### **Two Things To Take Home:**

Exodus 5:20-23 Romans 8:28

❶ Trust God's **Word** more than our **situation**.

❷ Trust that God can turn our **trouble** into a **triumph**.

## Food for Thought for the week of January 3, 2016

(Questions and Scriptures for further study)

---

**1.** Before setting resolutions in a new year, it's often helpful to take a look back at some of the highs and lows of the previous year. What were some of your biggest successes or wins in 2015? What were some of the biggest mistakes or hardest lessons?

**2.** Some of us had a really hard 2015. Despite this we were reminded this weekend that in our troubles there's opportunity for beneficial things to happen. How could that knowledge change your prayer life and outlook when bad things happen?

**3.** Read Romans 5:3-5. Looking at the list below, how have the following played out in your life this past year?

### **Romans 5:3-5**

<sup>3</sup> Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; <sup>4</sup> perseverance, character; and character, hope. <sup>5</sup> And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us. [NIV]

✓ Trials

✓ Perseverance

✓ Character

✓ Hope

**4.** As we wrap up this year and head into the new year, are there any blessings or praises you'd like to thank God for? Take some time to thank God for what he's done and also pray for the upcoming year. Use the following verses to help you in your prayers for 2016.

### **Psalms 119:33-40**

<sup>33</sup> Teach me, LORD, the way of your decrees,  
that I may follow it to the end.

<sup>34</sup> Give me understanding, so that I may keep your law  
and obey it with all my heart.

<sup>35</sup> Direct me in the path of your commands,  
for there I find delight.

<sup>36</sup> Turn my heart toward your statutes  
and not toward selfish gain.

- <sup>37</sup> Turn my eyes away from worthless things;  
preserve my life according to your word.
- <sup>38</sup> Fulfill your promise to your servant,  
so that you may be feared.
- <sup>39</sup> Take away the disgrace I dread,  
for your laws are good.
- <sup>40</sup> How I long for your precepts!  
In your righteousness preserve my life. [NIV]

### **Psalm 139:23-24**

- <sup>23</sup> Search me, God, and know my heart;  
test me and know my anxious thoughts.
- <sup>24</sup> See if there is any offensive way in me,  
and lead me in the way everlasting. [NIV]

### **Ephesians 1:17-23**

<sup>17</sup> I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. <sup>18</sup> I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, <sup>19</sup> and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength <sup>20</sup> he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, <sup>21</sup> far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. <sup>22</sup> And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, <sup>23</sup> which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way. [NIV]